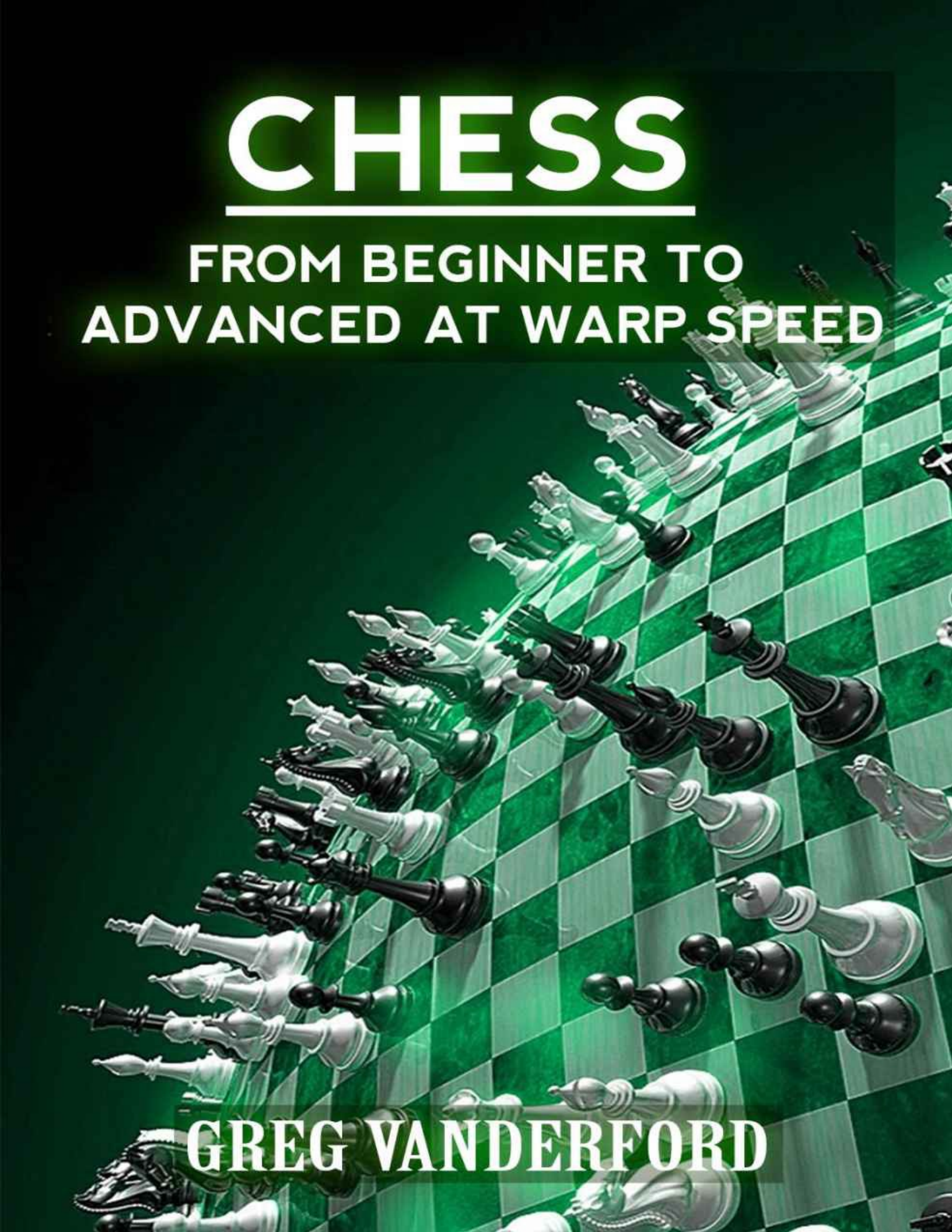
CHESS

FROM BEGINNER TO ADVANCED AT WARP SPEED



GREG VANDERFORD

Thank you for buying my eBook! I hope you enjoy it and please take advantage of this special offer for my online chess course:

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Introduction:

Chess is a wonderfully complex and challenging game that has been around since the 6th century CE. It is also a sport that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and backgrounds, especially in this digital age in which we are living when you can easily log in to a computer and instantly begin a game with someone halfway across the globe.

When you first learn how to move the pieces, it may feel like you have already digested quite a lot of information and struggle to remember the basics of the game. But learning how the pieces move is only the very first step in a long journey to understand the game of chess. In this book we start by introducing slightly more advanced concepts than a beginner is typically familiar with such as how to make wise captures, simple checkmates, an introduction to tactics, and important openings that every chess player must know.

This very system has been used to train thousands of players from a beginner to an advanced level over the course of my chess teaching career. Now you have the opportunity to go through a process that has been proven to produce strong chess players in a very short period of time and with more ease than any chess training system that exists.

By the end of the book, if you have worked through the entire volume, you will be ready take on stronger chess competition and continue onto the more advanced stages of chess training, which I cover in my next book, Chess: From Beginner to Advanced at Warp Speed Volume II

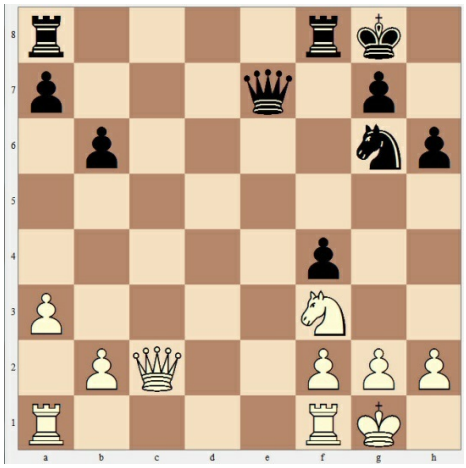
I am excited for you to begin your training and take the next step on the amazing journey that we can all enjoy, as fellow chess players and students!

Lesson 1: MAKING A WISE CAPTURE

Welcome back to the wonderful and fun world of chess! Now that you know about the rules and how all the chess pieces move, it is time to learn some tricks on how to play better and win!

It is generally a good idea to capture the opponent's pieces if it is "for free". For example, if you can capture your opponent's Bishop with your Rook, and your opponent is not able to capture your Rook back, it is a good deal.

However, if on the next turn, your opponent could capture your Rook back then the same idea would not be good for you. The reason is a Rook is a more valuable piece (5 points) than a Bishop (3 points).
Let's see some examples when you should capture an enemy piece and when you shouldn't.

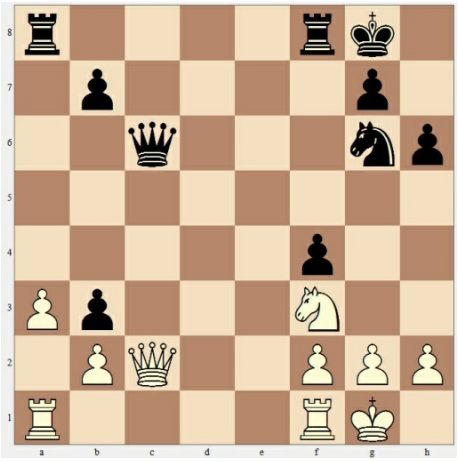


In the example above, Black played Qe7 to c5. The idea is to attack the White Queen on c2. However, it is a BAD move.
Black has no problem if White would capture the Black Queen (on c5). That would be just a simple even trade as the Black Pawn from b6 could immediately **recapture** (the White Queen on c5).
The problem for Black is the Knight on g6 is **unprotected**. Therefore, White's best move is Qxg6 winning a Knight for free.
White also has the option to check the Black King with Qb3+. However, Black could simply get out of the check with the King to h7 or h8 and at that

point the Knight on g6 would no longer be in any danger.
So what is the final verdict? White's best option would be Qxg6. It is much better than either Qxc5 or Qb3+ because both would miss the opportunity to win a piece for free.

Therefore, in the starting position instead of playing Qe7-c5, Black should have either moved the Knight to a safe square or protect it with another piece.

Let's compare the next position with the one we just saw.



At the first look this position is very similar to the last one.

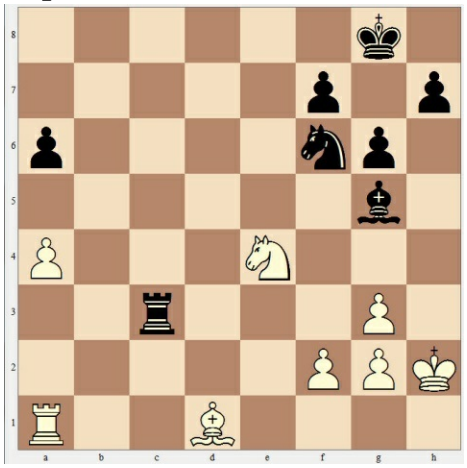
However, there are some major differences.

In this position, Black is again offering to exchange Queens, this time on c6 and not on c5. The reason why this is an important difference is now the Black Queen (on c6) is protecting the Knight on g6!

Therefore, Qxg6 now would be a big mistake (a blunder), as on the very next move Black could capture the White Queen on g6. This means that White loses a Queen (a 9 point piece) for only a Knight (a 3 point piece), which is a net loss of 6 points.
Again, White has the option to capture the Black Queen but that would be simply a trade after Black recaptures with the Pawn on b7 to c6 (bxc6).

Therefore, the best option White has here is to capture the Pawn on b3 for free. Even though it is “only” a Pawn, you have to value any advantage you can get.

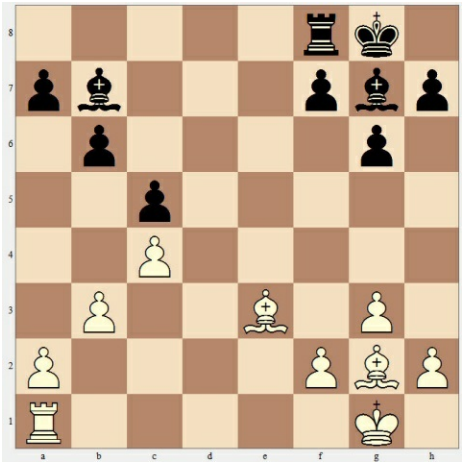
Let’s look at the next position where the White Knight has the option to capture one of three Black pieces.



Which piece should White capture, the Knight on f6, the Bishop on g5, or the Rook on c3?

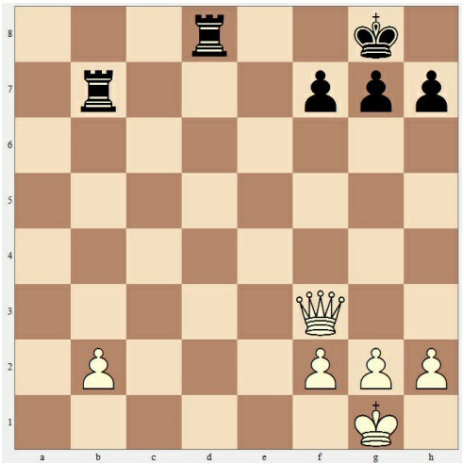
The Knight is not a free piece as it is protected by the Bishop on g5. The Bishop could be captured for free but that is only the second best option as the Rook is a more valuable piece. Therefore, Nxc3 is the correct answer.

In the next example, White can capture a piece, but it would be the wrong decision.



If White captures the Black Bishop on b7 (Bg2xb7), no Black piece can capture that White Bishop. However, Black can capture a different piece which is more valuable, the Rook on a1, with the Bishop on g7.

Therefore, it is best for White to move the Rook from a1 to a safe square such as d1.



In the example above, White has the option to capture the Black Rook on b7. It seems that it is for free. However, there is a BIG problem if White does that. Black can checkmate White in one move by moving the Rook from d8 to d1!

The safety of your King should always come first. Winning material is secondary!

Lesson 1 – Test

1-2. In the following positions, which White piece can Black capture for free?

1.

2.

3-4. In the next two examples, which Black piece should White capture to win the most material?

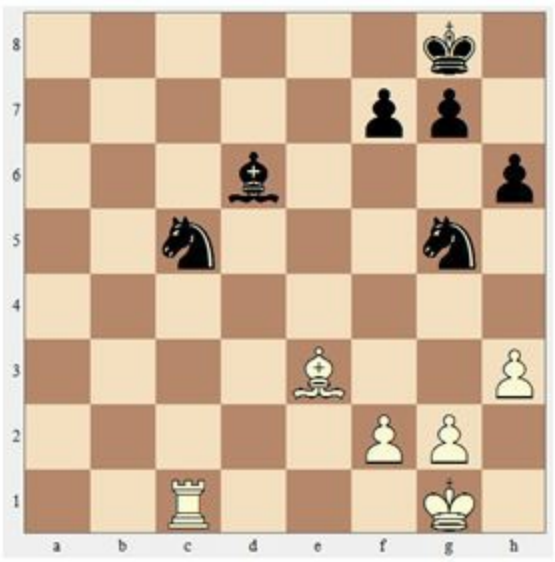
3.

4.

5-8. In the four positions below, what is the move for White that wins the most material?

5.

6.



7.

8.

9-12. In the four positions below, what is the move for Black that wins the most material?

9.

10.

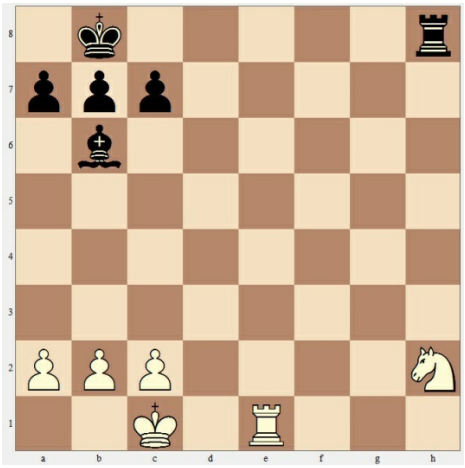
11.

12.

Lesson 2: SIMPLE CHECKMATES

In this lesson you will see various typical checkmate ideas. They are very important to remember.

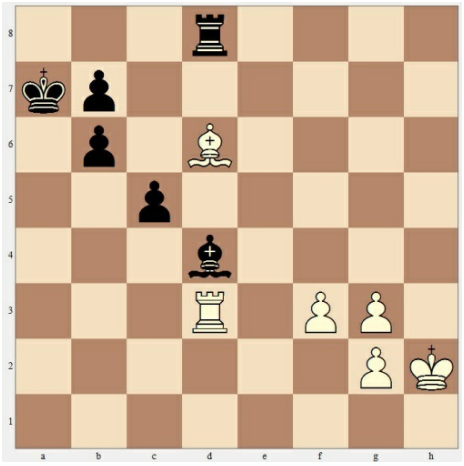
Back Rank Checkmates
One of the most common mistakes beginners do is to allow the “Back Rank” checkmate.



In this position, Black’s back rank is safe as the Rook on h8 is guarding against the White Rook entering on e8.

However, if Black captures the White Knight on h2, then White can checkmate with Re8 as no Black piece is guarding the back rank.

Back rank checkmate occurs when the King is checkmated at the edge of the board, usually on the eighth rank for a Black King or the first rank for the White King. The same problem could happen on the “a” or “h” files to either King as you can see in the next example.

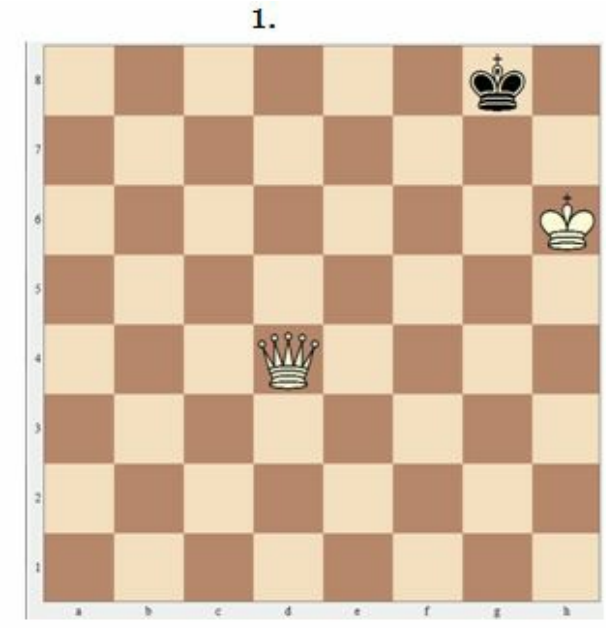


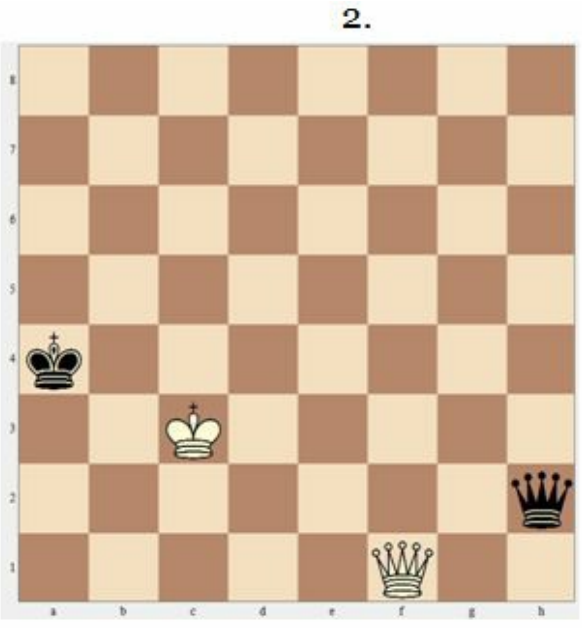
In this position, the side who is to move wins! If it is White's turn, Ra3 results checkmate to the Black King.

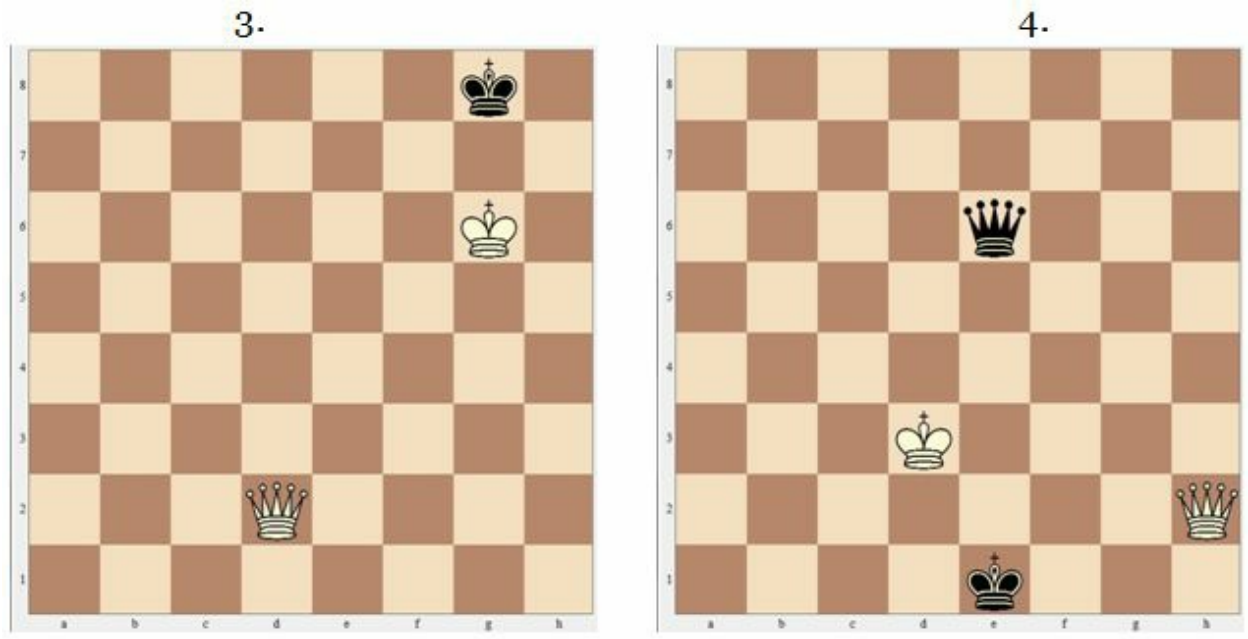
If it would be Black's move then Rh8 checkmate to end the game.

Simple checkmates with Queen

Let's see some typical checkmates in one move with the Queen:







Answers: 1.) Qg7 2.) Qa6 3.) Qd8 4.) Qg1.

Lesson 2 - Test

1-6. It is Black to move in each of the next six positions. What is the correct move to checkmate the White King?

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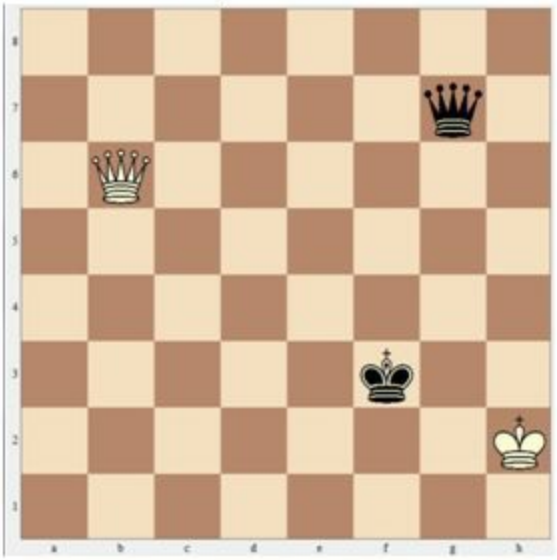
2.

3.



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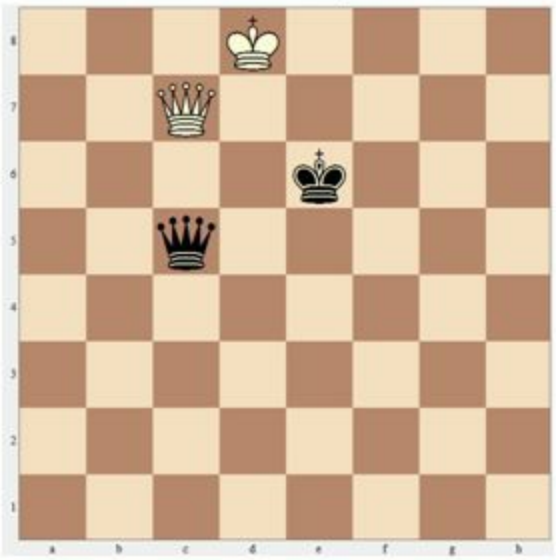

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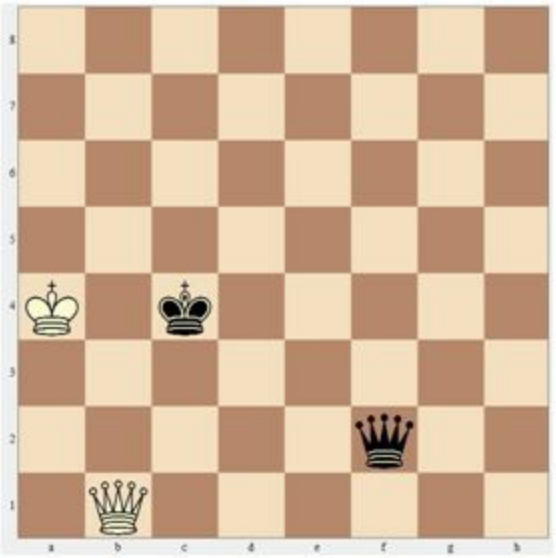

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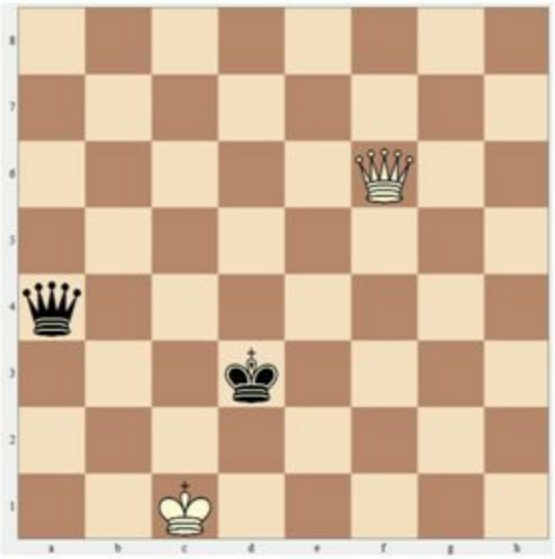
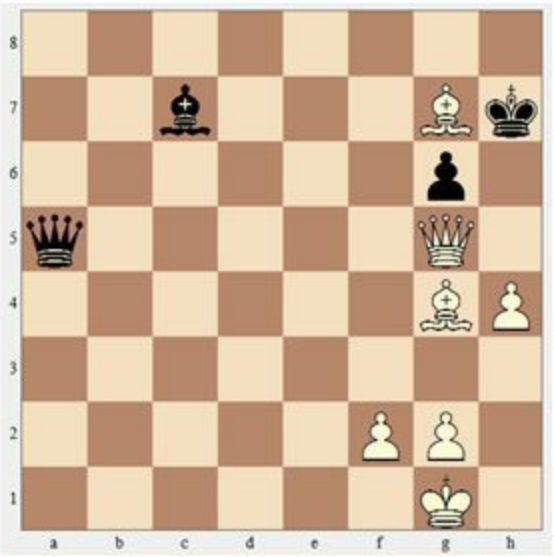


7-12. It is Black to move. Find a way to checkmate the White King in one move!

7.



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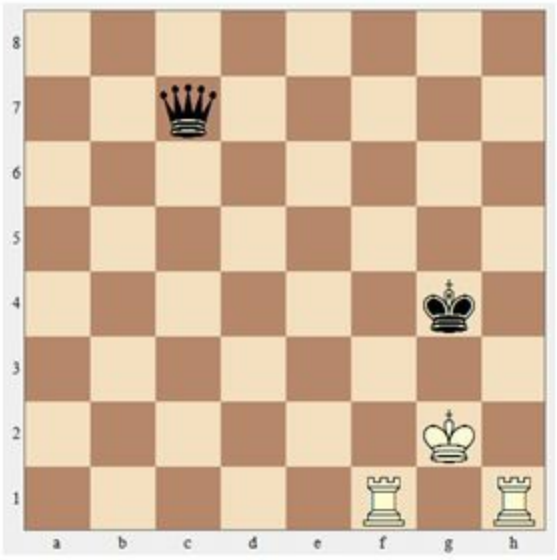

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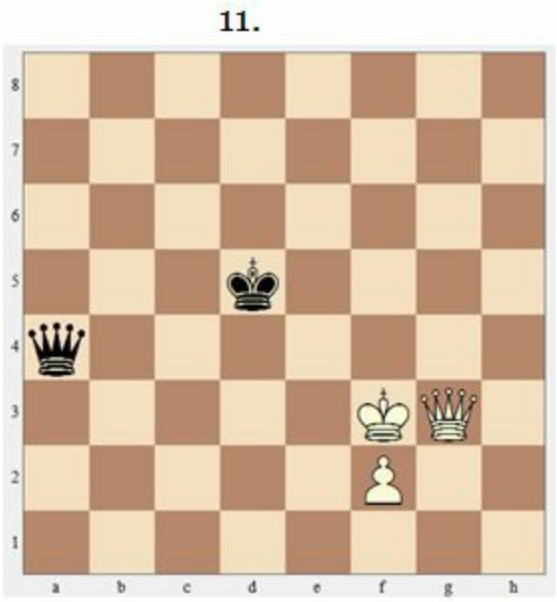

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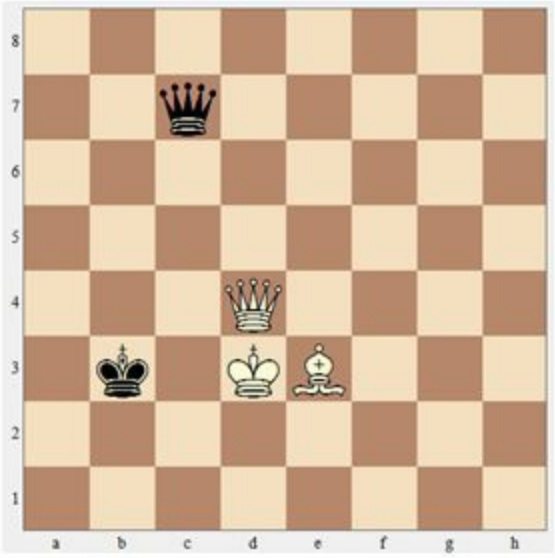
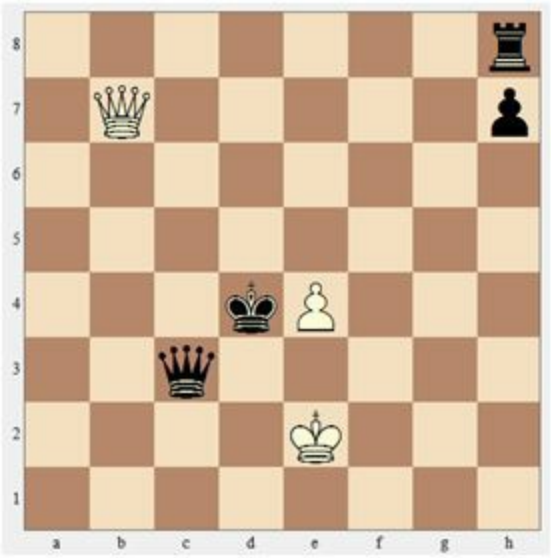


13-18. It is White to move. Find a way to checkmate the Black King in one move!

13.

14.

15.



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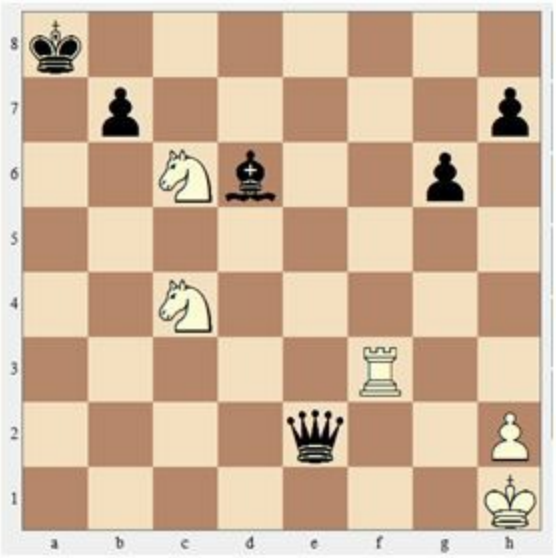

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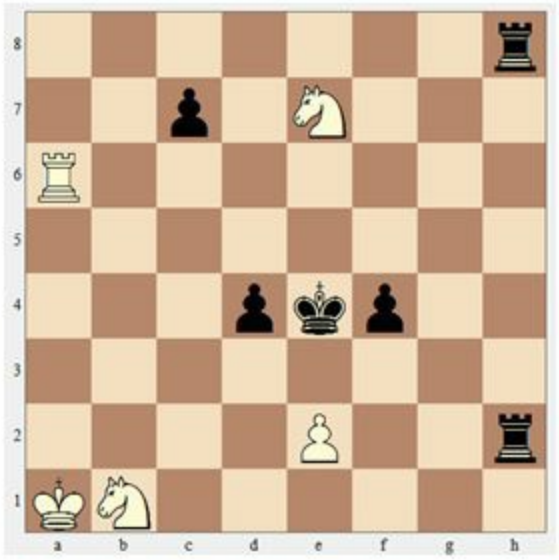

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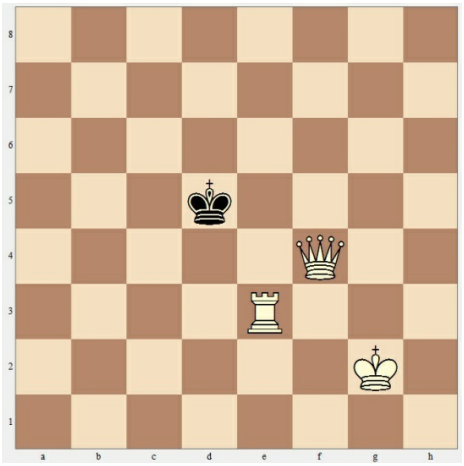
Lesson 3: CHECKMATE WITH QUEEN AND ROOK

Now we will learn how to checkmate the opponent's King with only your Queen and Rook (and of course your King as there is no chess game without it).



Here the simplest and fastest way to checkmate the Black King is the "ladder method".

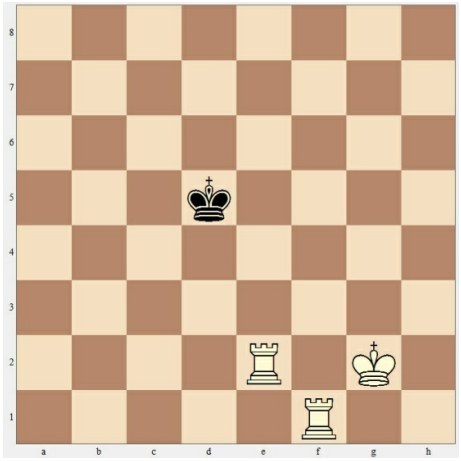
White starts checking the King with **1.Re5+**. Black has no other choice but to move the King back to the sixth rank, for example **1…Kd6.**

It is the Queen's turn to check with **2.Qf6+**. Again Black must move down to the seventh rank, for example **2…Kd7**.

And now, back to the Rook with **3.Re7+**. Finally the King cannot avoid but move to the eighth rank **3…Kd8**.

It is time for the knockout punch with **4. Qf8** checkmate!

You can use a similar method if you have two Rooks (and no Queen) in addition to the the Kings on the board.



The goal is to force the Black King to the edge of the board (1st & 8th rank or the “a” or “h” file) as it is easiest to checkmate there.

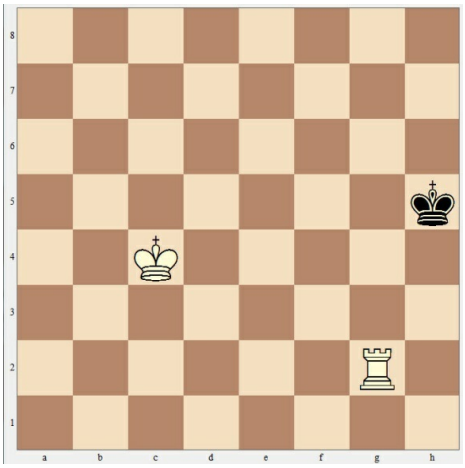
Here, White will force the Black King toward the “a” file.

1.Rd1+ Kc4 2.Rc2+ Kb3

Unlike when we had a Queen, the Rook needs to get far away from the opponent’s King so it could not be attacked or captured.

3.Rc8 Kb2 4.Rd7 Kb3 5.Rb7+ Ka4 and **6.Ra8** checkmate.

In the next example, imagine that you have a Rook in your hand. You are allowed to put it on any square at the chess board. Where should you place so that the Black King would be checkmated?

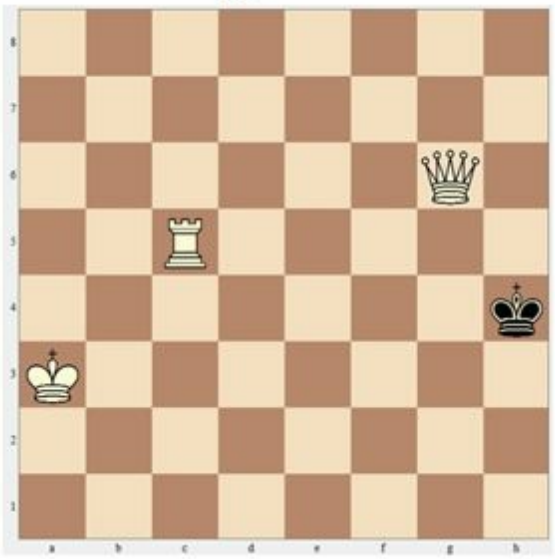


You could drop it almost anywhere on the “h” file (h1, h2, h3, h7, or h8) to checkmate, as long as the Black King cannot capture it.

Lesson 3 – Test

1-4. Find the move that checkmates the Black King in one move.

1.



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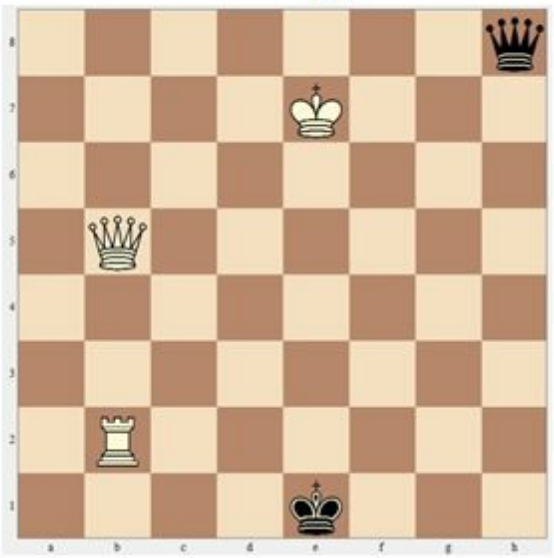

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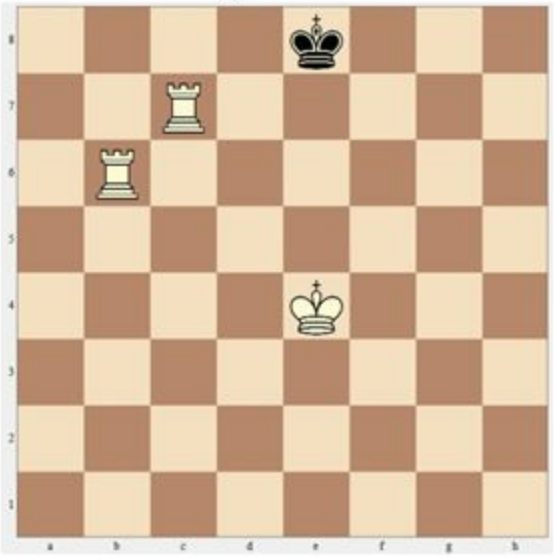

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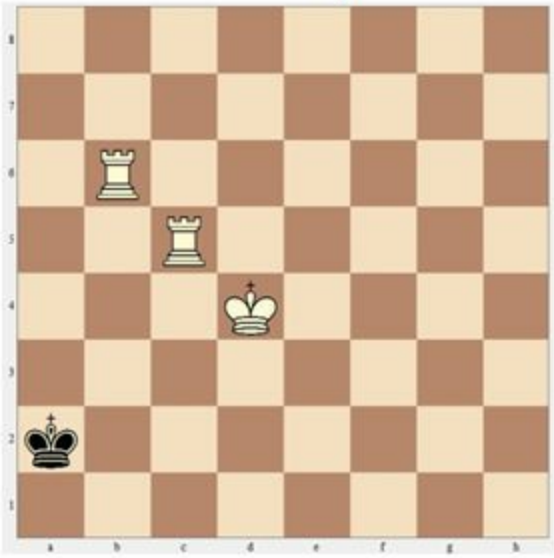
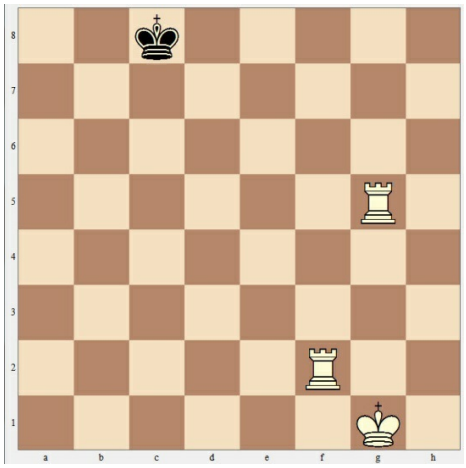
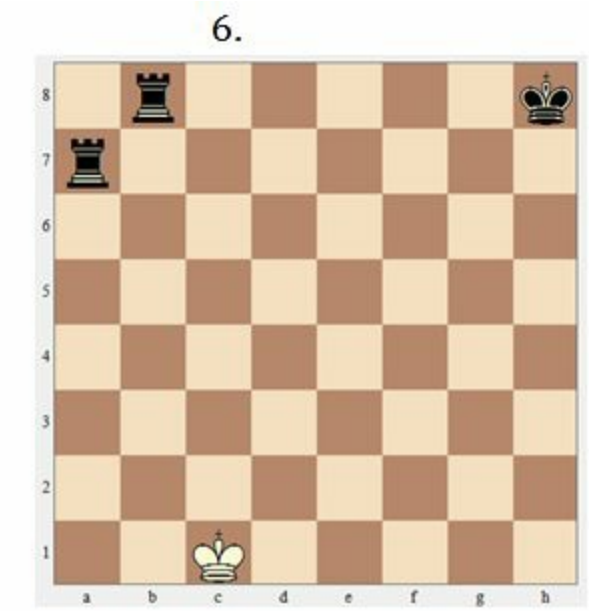


5. What should be White's first move to make sure Black cannot escape checkmate on the second move?



6-9. It is Black to move. Find a way to checkmate the White King in two moves!

6.



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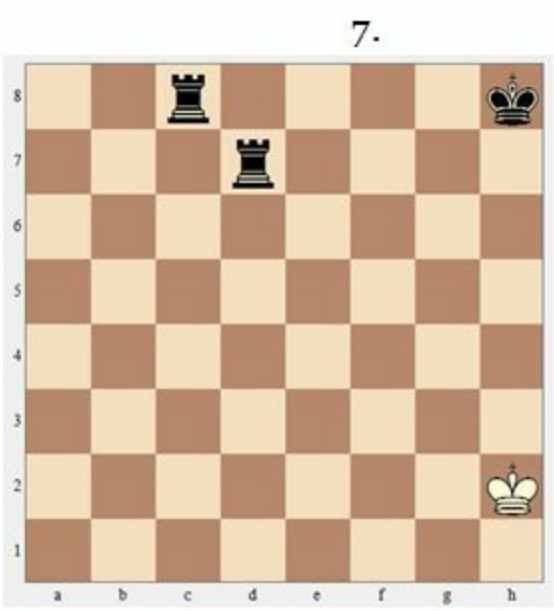

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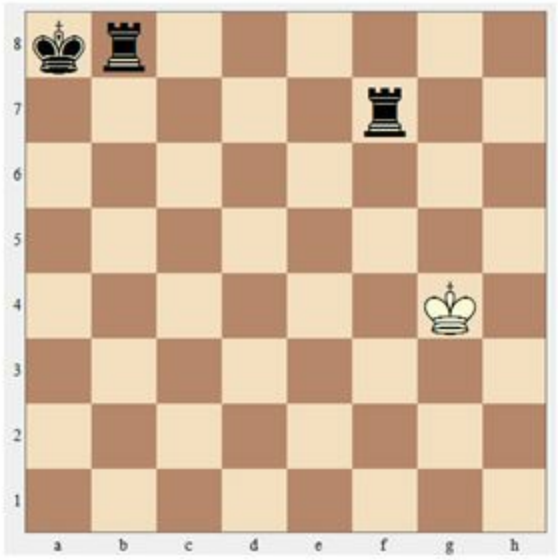

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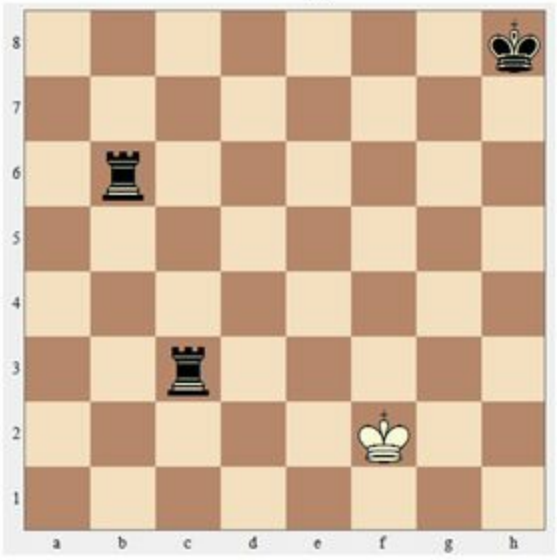

11-14. It is Black to move. Find a way to checkmate the White King in two moves!

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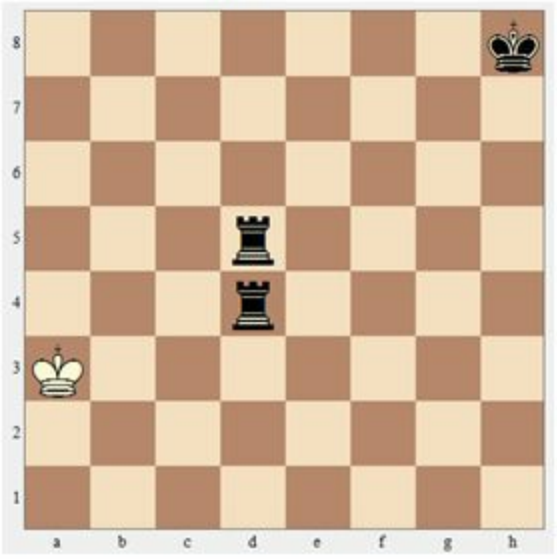

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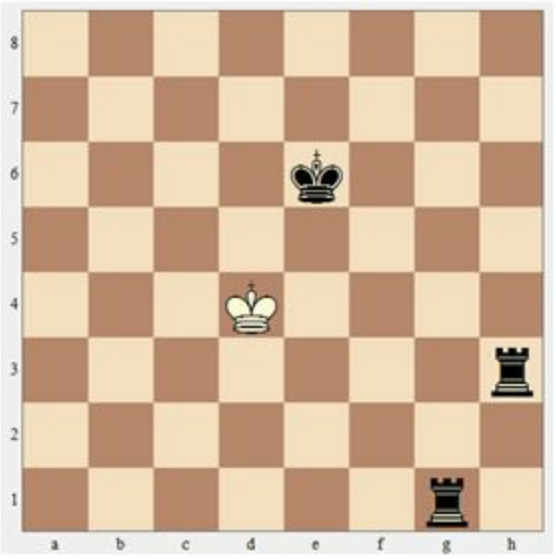

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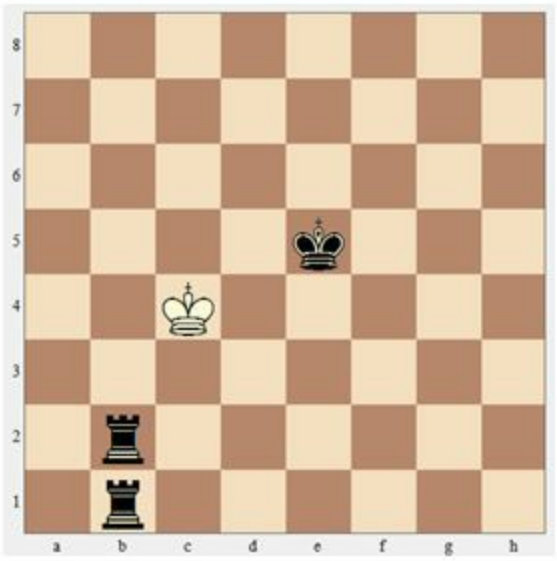

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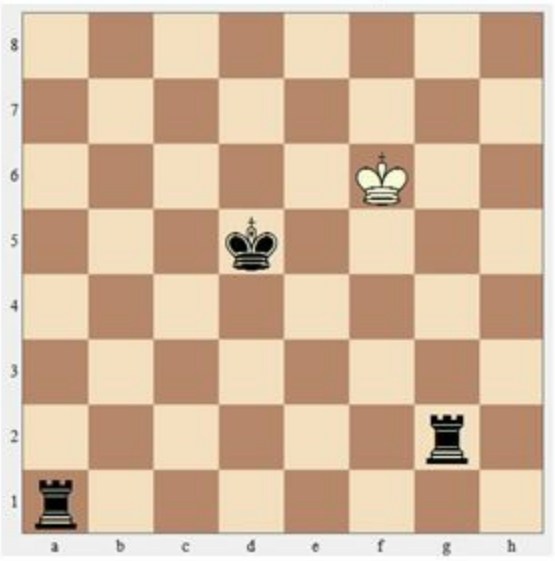
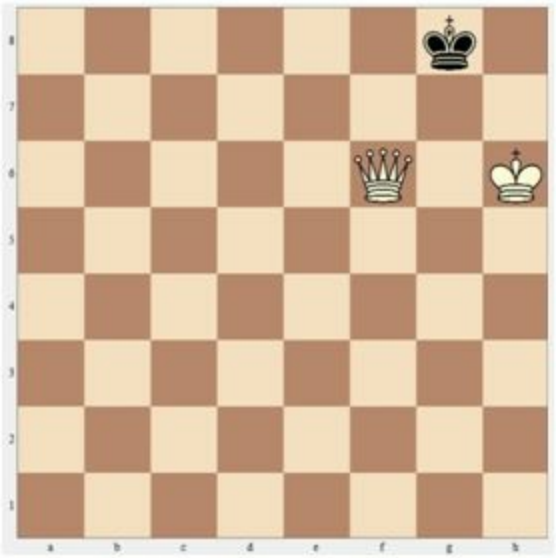


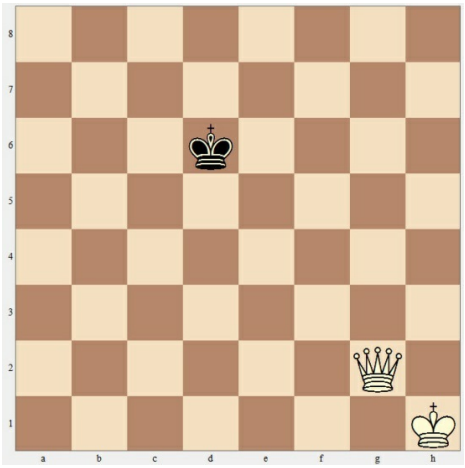
Lesson 4: CHECKMATE WITH THE QUEEN

In this lesson, you will learn how to checkmate in positions where there are only three pieces left on the board: King and Queen against a lonely King.

A key thing to remember is not to create a stalemate position along the way! Here are some typical stalemate positions to make sure to avoid!



If it is Black's turn to move in the above positions, it would be stalemate and the games would end in a draw. The most important thing to remember about these types of endgames is that the King can ONLY be checkmated at the edge of the board.

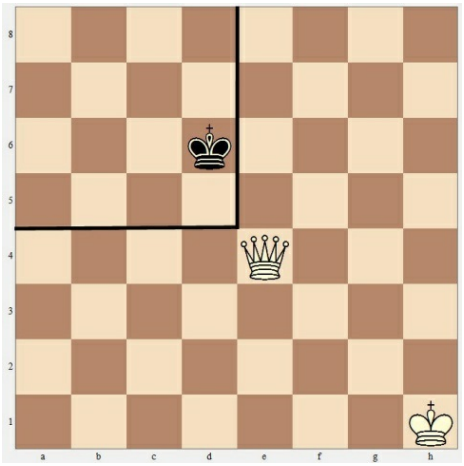


Looking at the diagram above, you can see that the Black King is on d6. The goal should be to force the King either to the eighth rank or to the "a" file.

Here is the game plan on how to checkmate Black:

Step 1) Use the Queen to force the Black King to the edge of the board (8th rank or “a” file in this case)
Step 2) Cut off all possible escape routes for the Black King, and to make sure the King stays there.
Step 3) Only after completing steps 1 and 2, you will need to bring the (White) King to help.
Step 4) Checkmate!
Let’s see how it works in practice:

Step 1)
1.Qe4



With this move, White puts the Black King in a “box”. Now the King cannot cross the “e” file or the 4th rank.

It is also worth noticing that the distance between the Queen and the Black King is an L-shape, just as if a Knight would be checking the Black King.

1.Kc5 2.Qd3
White is “tightening the box” by taking more territory away from the Black King, making the “box” smaller and smaller.

2.Kb4 3.Qc2 Kb5 4.Qc3 Kb6 5.Qc4 Kb7 6.Qc5 Kb8

Finally, the Black King has no choice but to step on a square near edge of the board. If Black had played 6…Ka6 instead of 6…Kb8, then 7.Qb4 would be the best answer.

Step 2)
7.Qe7
White is making sure the Black King cannot escape from the 8th rank.
7…Kc8

Step 3)
Now that the Black King is limited to making moves on the 8th rank, it is time to bring the White King in to help.
8.Kg2 Kb8
There is no need to make the box even smaller by playing 8.Qd7 Ka8, and now 9.Qc7 would be an outright *blunder* as it would result **stalemate** ending the game in a draw!
9.Kf3 Kc8 10.Ke4 Kb8 11.Kd5 Kc8 12.Kc6 Kb8
And now finally

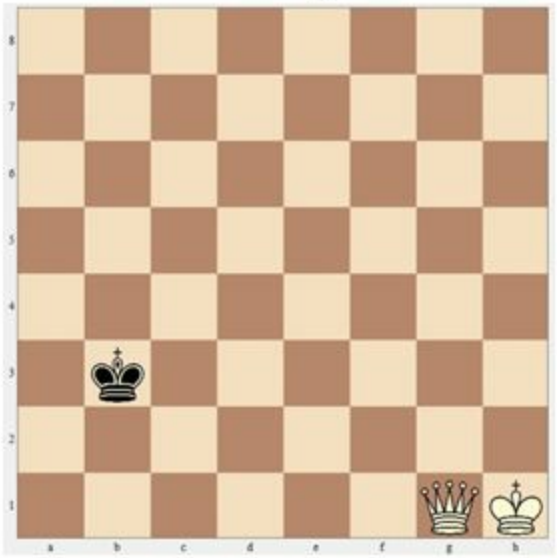
Step 4) 13.Qb7 checkmate!

Lesson 4 – Test

1-2.What should White play to limit the Black King to the smallest “box”?

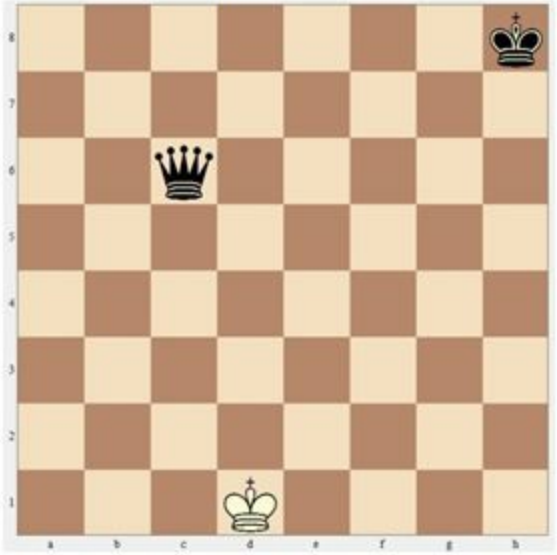
1.

2.



3-4.What is the move that will make sure that the White King will be stuck at the first rank or the “h” file?

3.



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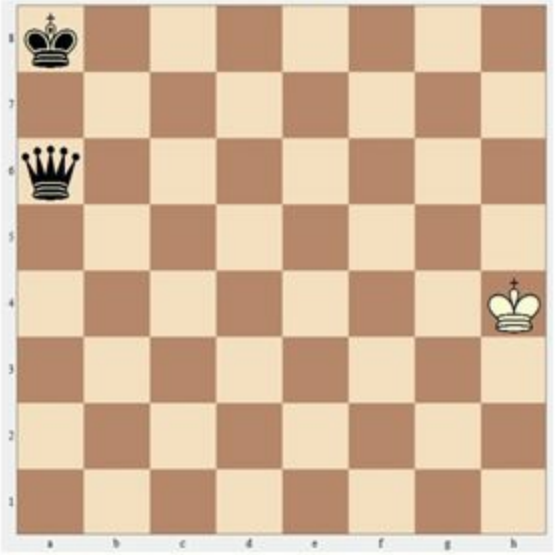
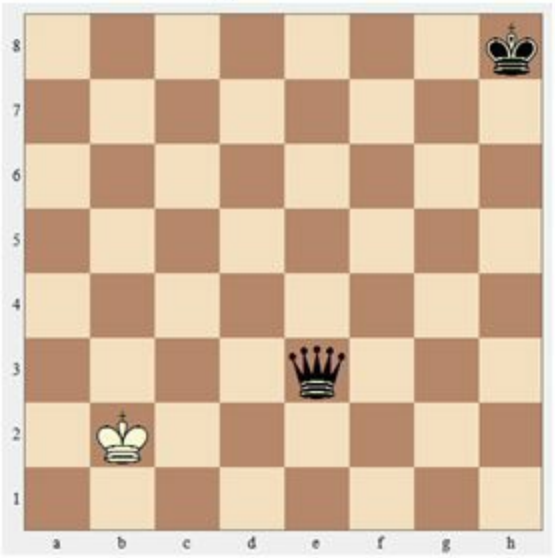


5-8. It is Black to move. What is the best move to get closer to “cornering” the White King?

5.



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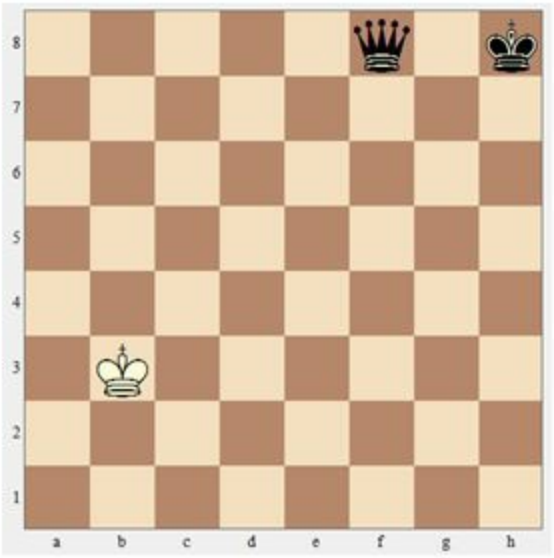

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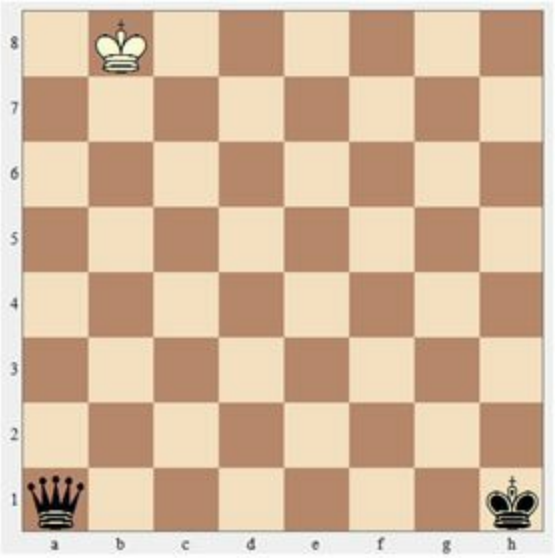

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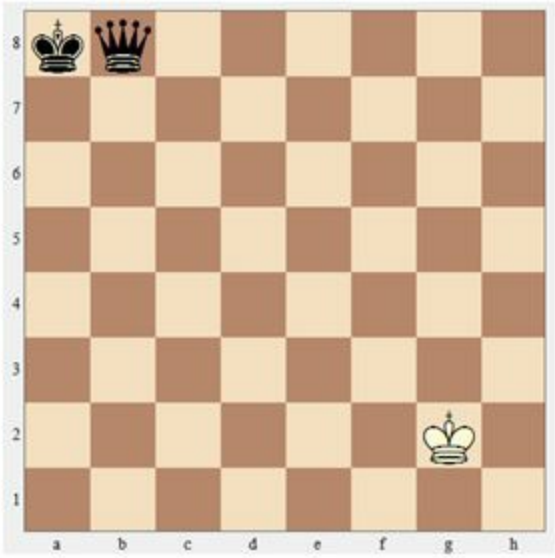
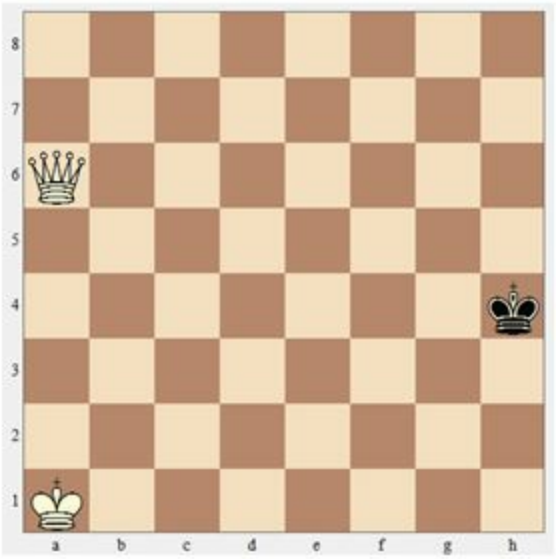


9-12. It is White move. What is the best move to get closer to “cornering” the Black King?

9.

10.



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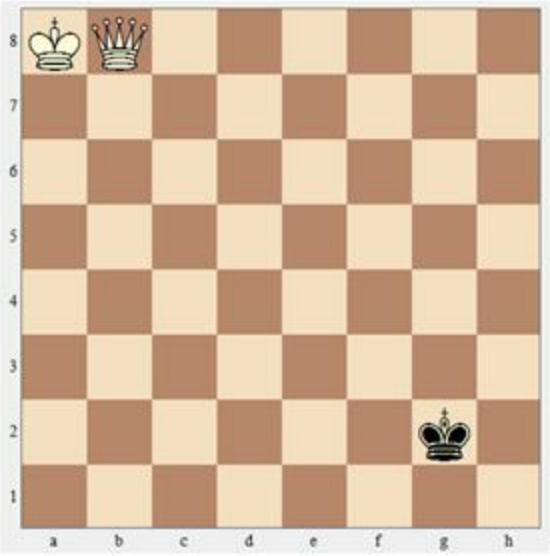

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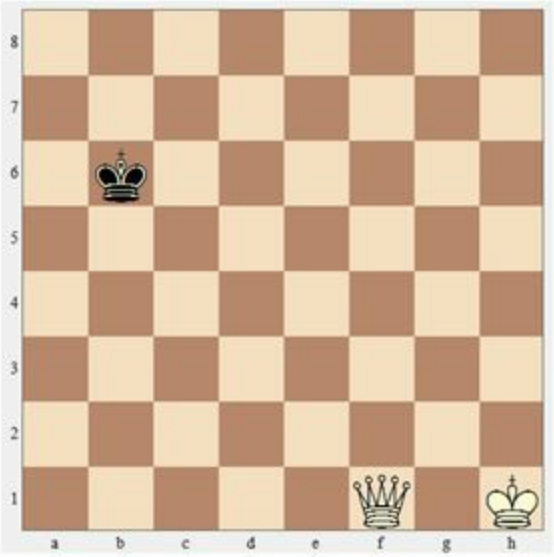
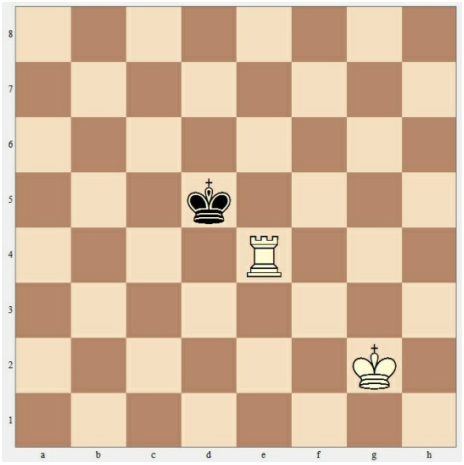


Lesson 5: CHECKMATE WITH THE ROOK - WITH TWO BISHOPS

In this lesson, you will learn how to checkmate with a King and Rook against a lonely King. You will also learn how to checkmate with two Bishops against a sole King. It will be a piece of cake once you know the idea behind it.



Just as in the King and Queen against King endgames, the King can ONLY be checkmated at the edge of the board. Usually you actually need to force the King all the way to one of the corners or a square next to it.

The difference is that when you have a Rook instead of the Queen, you do need the help of the King in order to force the enemy King to the edge of the board.

The White Rook is under attack. Instead of moving the Rook, it is best in this case to defend it by moving the White King closer **1.Kf3**.

1…Kc5 2.Ke3 Kd5 3.Kd3 Kc5

Now with the help of the King, White is ready to make the “box” smaller.

4.Rd4 Kc6 5.Kc4

Here the White King plays an important role to limit the moves of the Black King.

5…Kb6 6.Rd6+ Kc7

If Black played 6…Ka5 instead, then after 7.Re6 Black cannot avoid checkmate on the following move, 7…Ka4 and 8.Ra6 checkmate.

7.Kc5

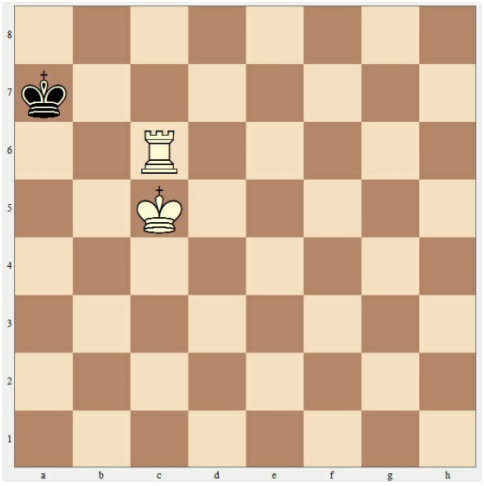
By protecting the Rook instead of moving it away, White makes sure the Black King remains in the “box”.

7…Kb7 8.Rc6

And the box is getting smaller and smaller.

8…Ka7

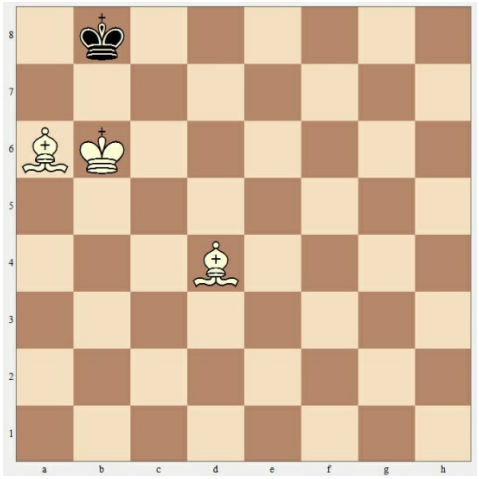
Finally, the Black King is forced to the edge of the board.



White just has to make sure the King will stay there and will not have an escape.

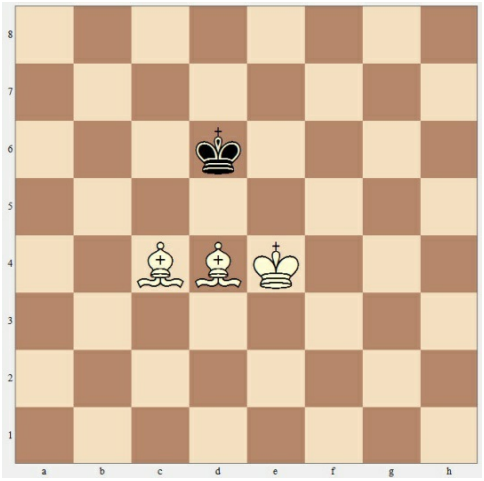
9.Rb6 Ka8 10.Kc6 Ka7 11.Kc7 Ka8 and now of course not 12.Rb7 which would result stalemate but **12.Ra6** checkmate.

Now let’s see how to checkmate with King and ***two Bishops*** against a lone King.



Here the Black King is already limited to the corner of the board. Therefore, checkmate comes quickly with 1.***Be5+ Ka8*** and 2***.Bb7*** checkmate.

In the next example, the task is harder as the Black King is still far the corner.



The method here is similar to checkmating with a Rook. Slowly but surely White needs to take squares away from the enemy King until it has no choice but end up in (or next to) the corner.

1.Bd5 Kd7 2.Bc5

The two Bishops work together nicely as a team, limiting the Black King's mobility.

2…Kc7

It is time to bring the King to help.

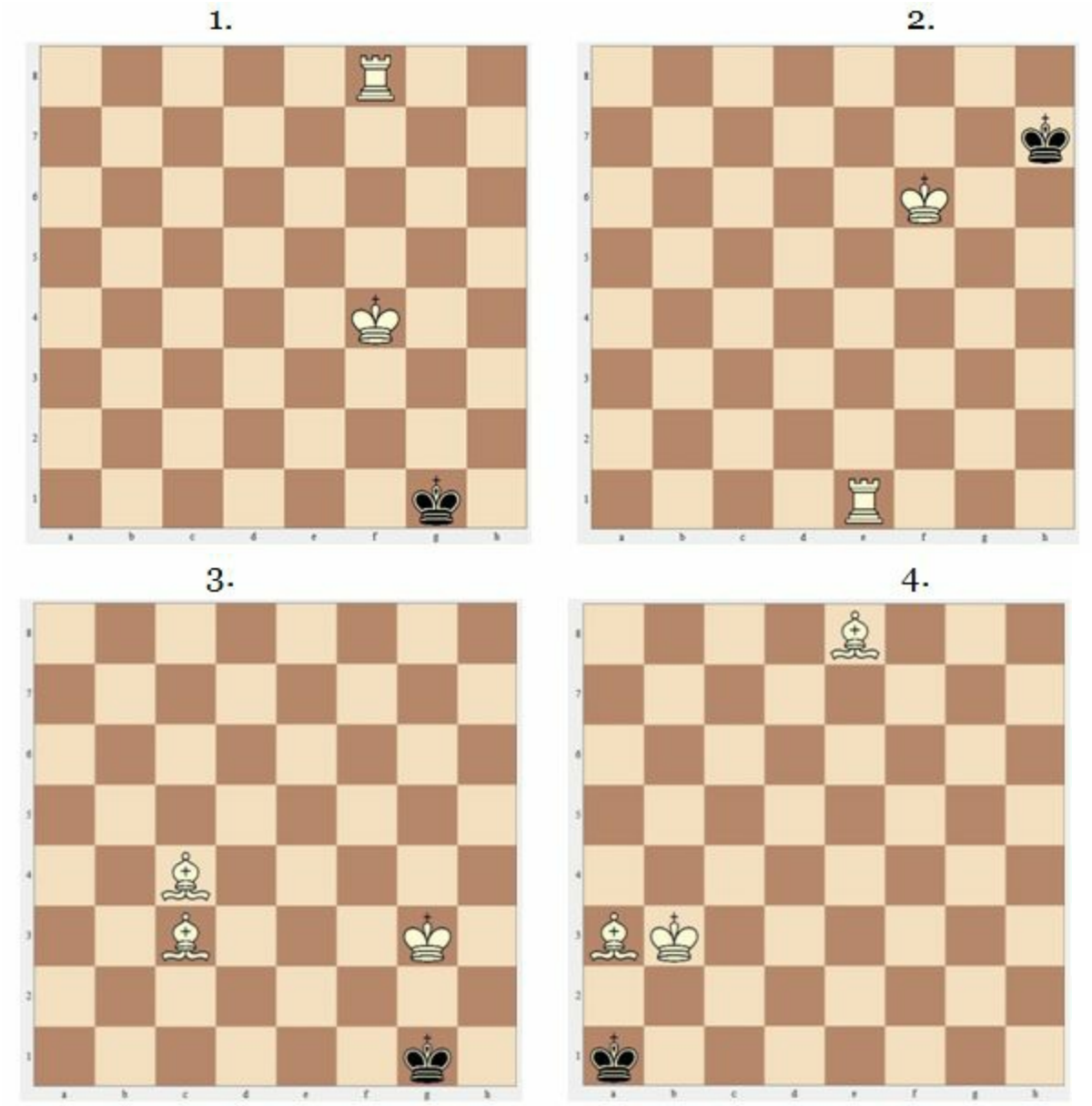
3.Ke5 Kd7 4.Bd6 Kd8 5.Bc6Kc8 6.Kd5 Kd8 7.Kc5 Kc8 8.Kb6 Kd8 9.Bb5 Kc8 10.Be7 Kb8 11.Ba6 Ka8 and now that the King is cornered checkmate is near, just two more moves.

12.Bb7+ (but surely not 12.Bd6 which would be stalemate) **12…Kb8** and **13.Bd6** checkmate.

Having a Bishop and Knight against a King is also a winning advantage. However two Knights (in addition to only Kings on the board) is usually not enough advantage to win the game.

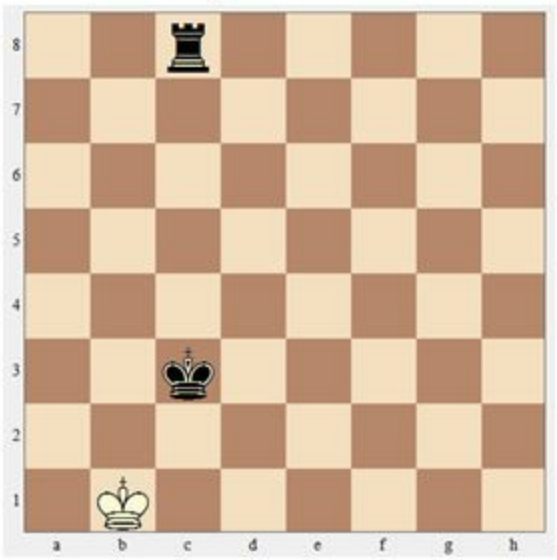
Lesson 5 - Test

1-4. How can White checkmate Black in just two moves?



5-8. It is Black to move. Find a way to checkmate the White King in two moves!

5.



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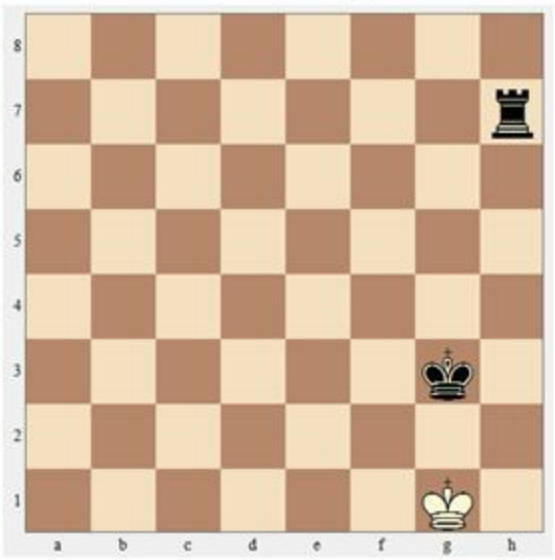

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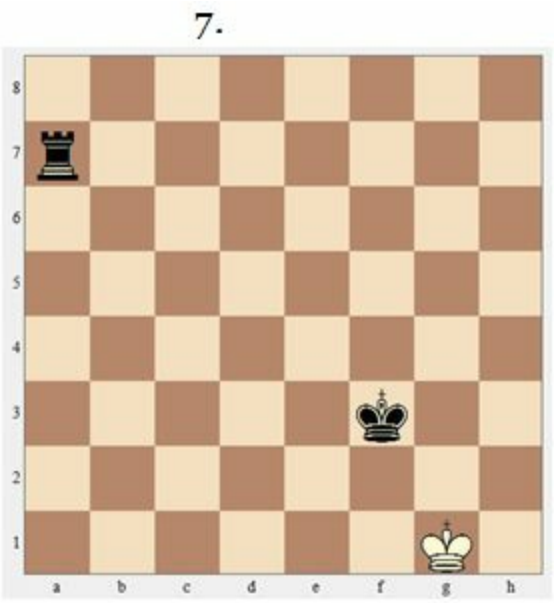

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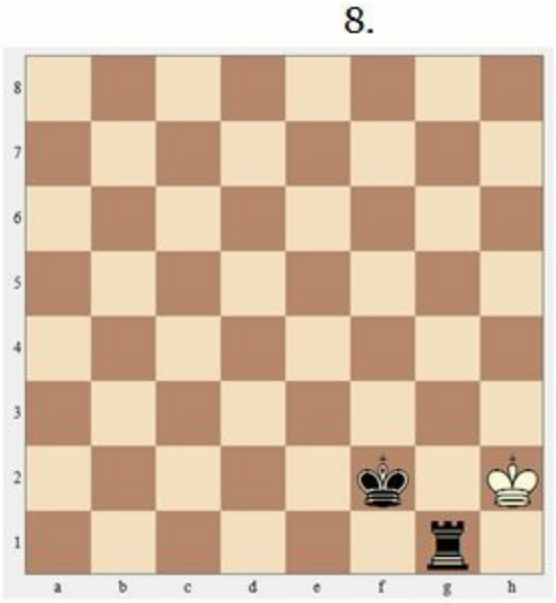
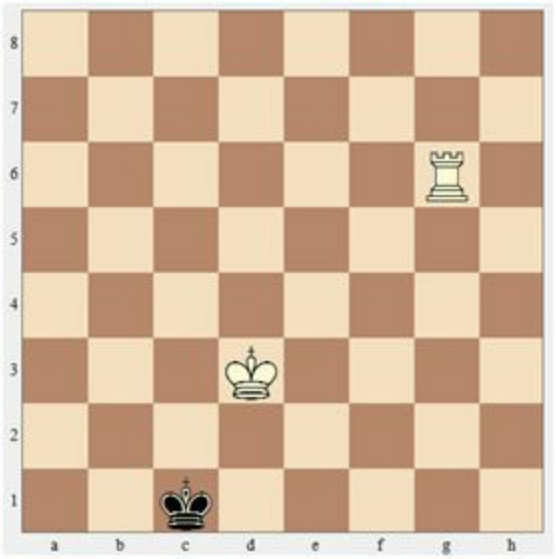


9-12. It is White to move. Find a way to checkmate the Black King in two moves!

9.

10.



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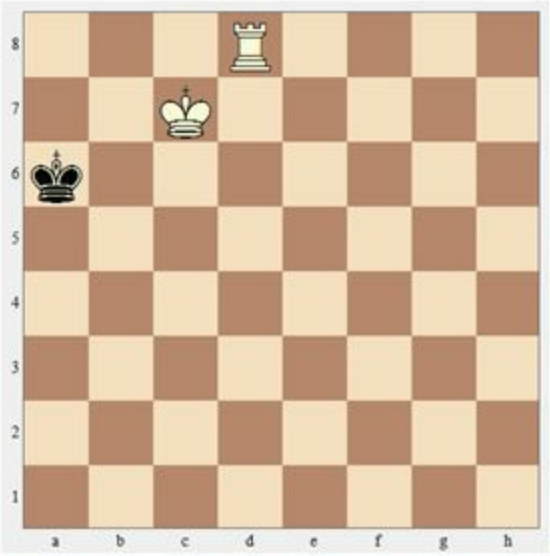

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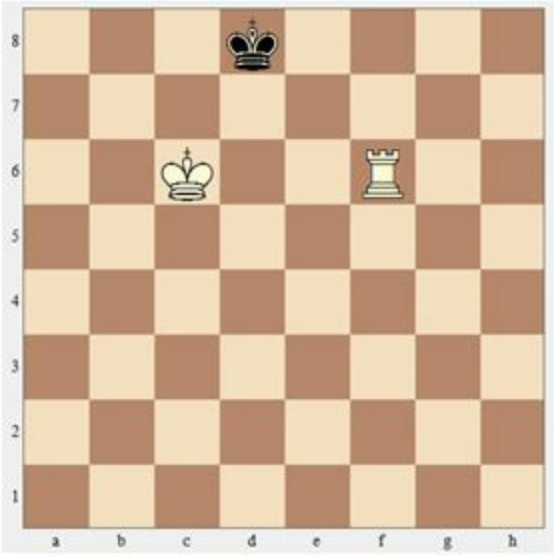


Lesson 6: DOUBLE ATTACK / FORK

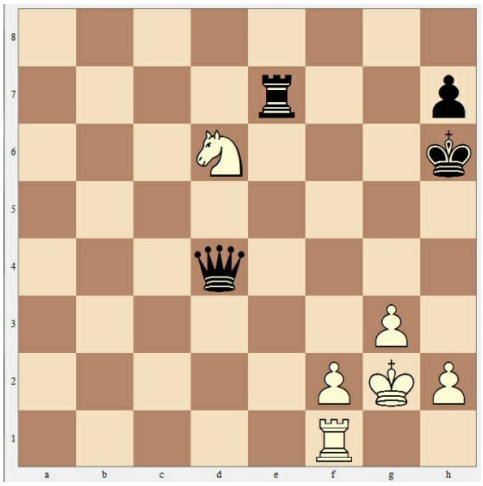
In this lesson, we will learn about a special tactic called "**fork**". They are not the forks you eat with, but in some ways actually quite similar. Just like when we use the fork to pick up a piece of meat and potato at once, in chess when we "fork" it means that we attack two (or more) of the opponent's pieces at the same time.

A **double attack** can also be when you attack an opponent's piece as well as threaten to checkmate the King at the same time.

The idea of a double attack is to win material. Forking is a very powerful tool, as usually the other side cannot defend both attacked pieces at the same time.

Let's see how each piece is able to fork.

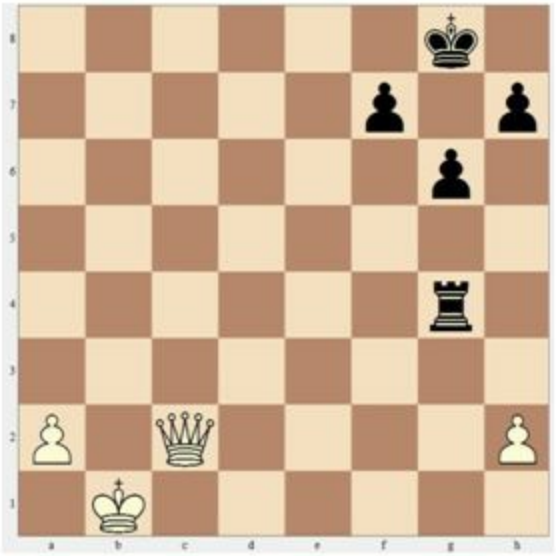
The Knight is a very powerful "forking" piece, which can even create a "family fork".



In the position above, White plays Nf5+. It will check the Black King, while at the same time it also attacks the Black Queen and Rook.

Black will have no choice but to move the King out of check (no time to move the Queen out of danger). After that, White can capture the Black Queen for free with Nxd4. It is obviously better than capturing the Black Rook on e7 as the Queen is a more valuable piece.

Here are some examples on how the Queen can fork.



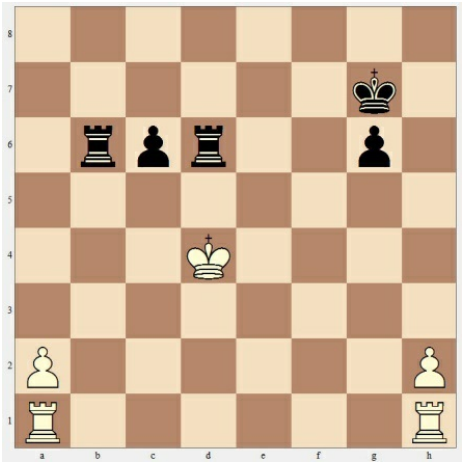
In the first example, White can fork (the Black King and Rook) with Qc8+.
In the second example, Qc7 creates a double attack on the Black Rook and Knight.

Here is one example each of how a Rook or Bishop can fork.

Here in the first example, the double attack comes with Re7+, after which Black will be in check, while the Bishop on g7 is also attacked.

In the second position, White by capturing the Black Pawn on d5 (Bxd5+) not only wins a Pawn, but creates a fork at the same time to win also Black's Rook.

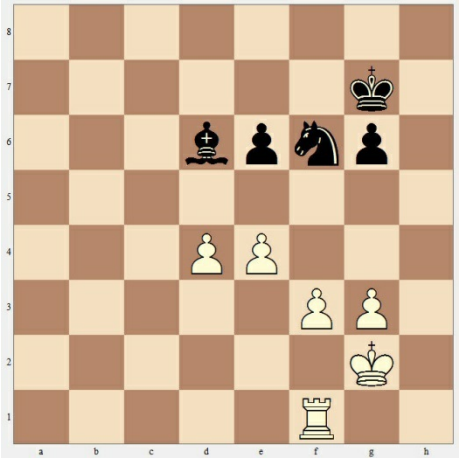
Remember that all pieces are capable to fork, even the King or Pawn.



In the example above, White is in check. However, that doesn't stop White from creating a fork by simply moving the King out of check to create a fork

by 1.Kc5.

And finally let's see how a Pawn forks.



Here White should push the Pawn up from e4 to e5 (e5) to attack both the Black Bishop and Knight.

Remember the same would not work if the White Pawn would be on d3 instead of being on d4. Then if White still would play e5, the Black Bishop would simply capture the Pawn on e5.

Forking is a lot of fun, and it is a good feeling when you are able to use such tactics in your own games.

Lesson 6 – Test

1-6. Find White's move which creates a fork in each of the following six positions.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7-12. It is Black to move. Find the best move for Black to win material!

7.

8.

9.

10.

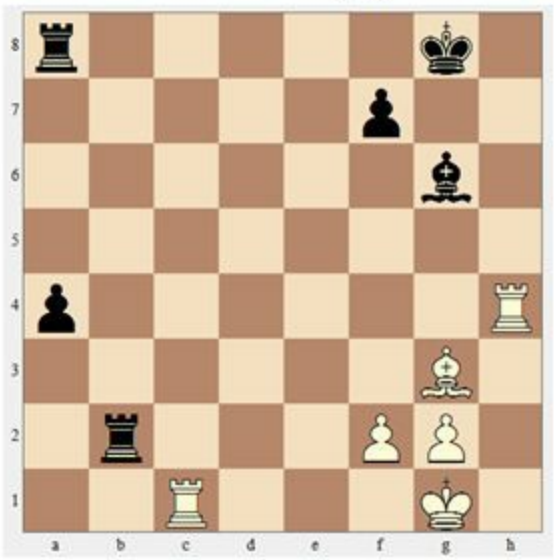
11.

12.

13-18. It is White to move. Find the best move for White to win material!

13.

14.



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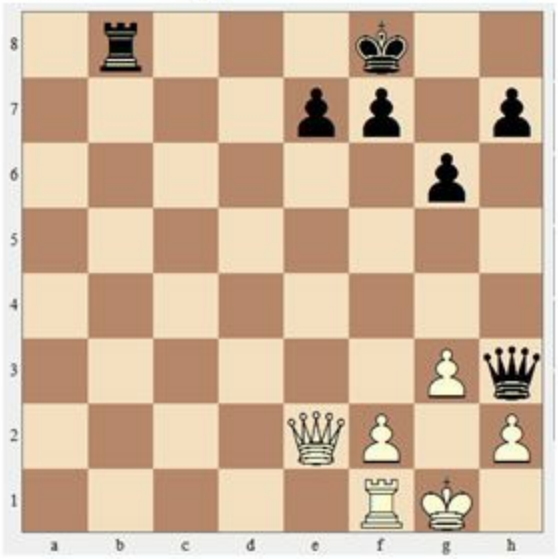

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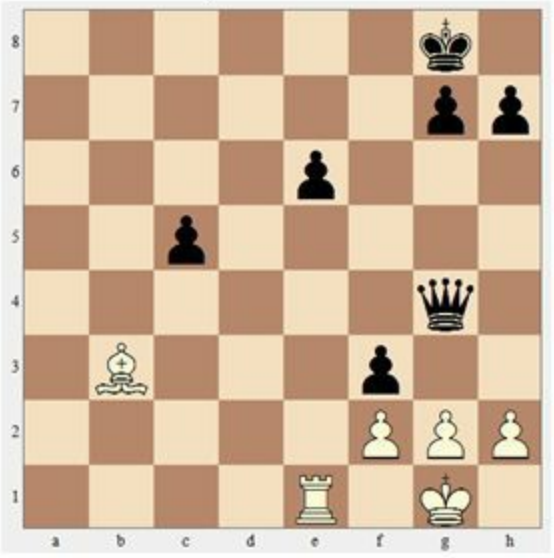


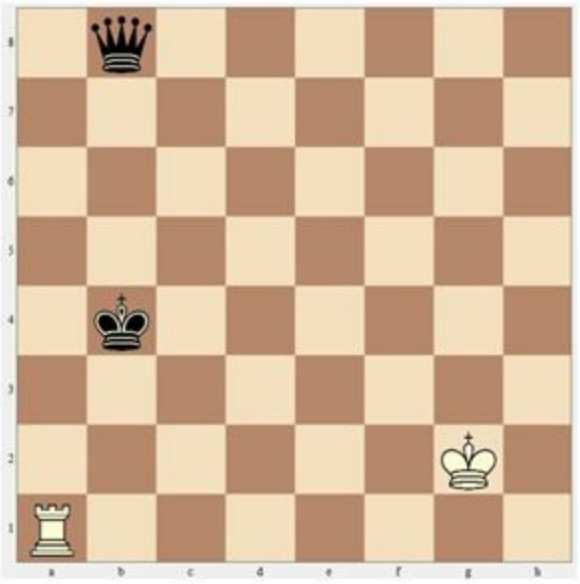
18.

Lesson 7: SKEWER

In this lesson, you will be introduced to another important chess tactic: the **skewer**. Its purpose is the same as of the “fork”, which is to win material.

When we talk about a skewer, it always has three elements: an attacking piece, and two enemy pieces, both lined up on the same rank, file or diagonal. Here are some examples on how it works.

1.



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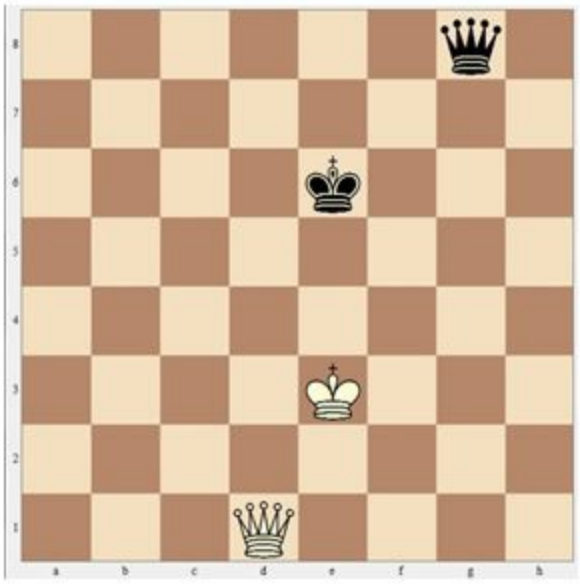
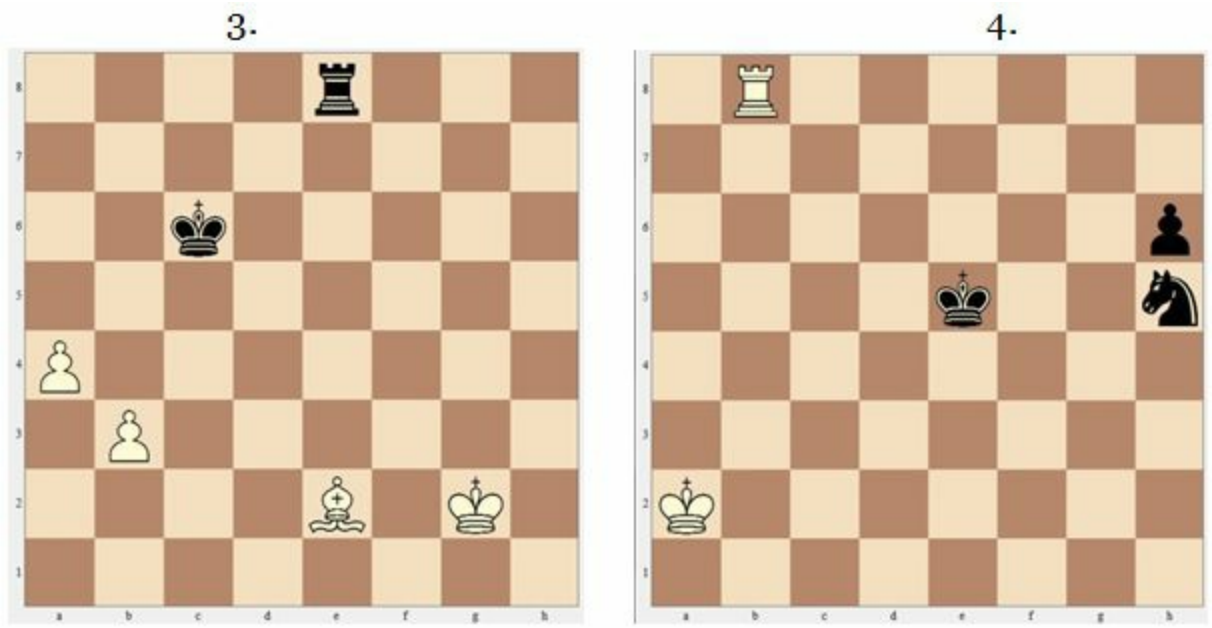


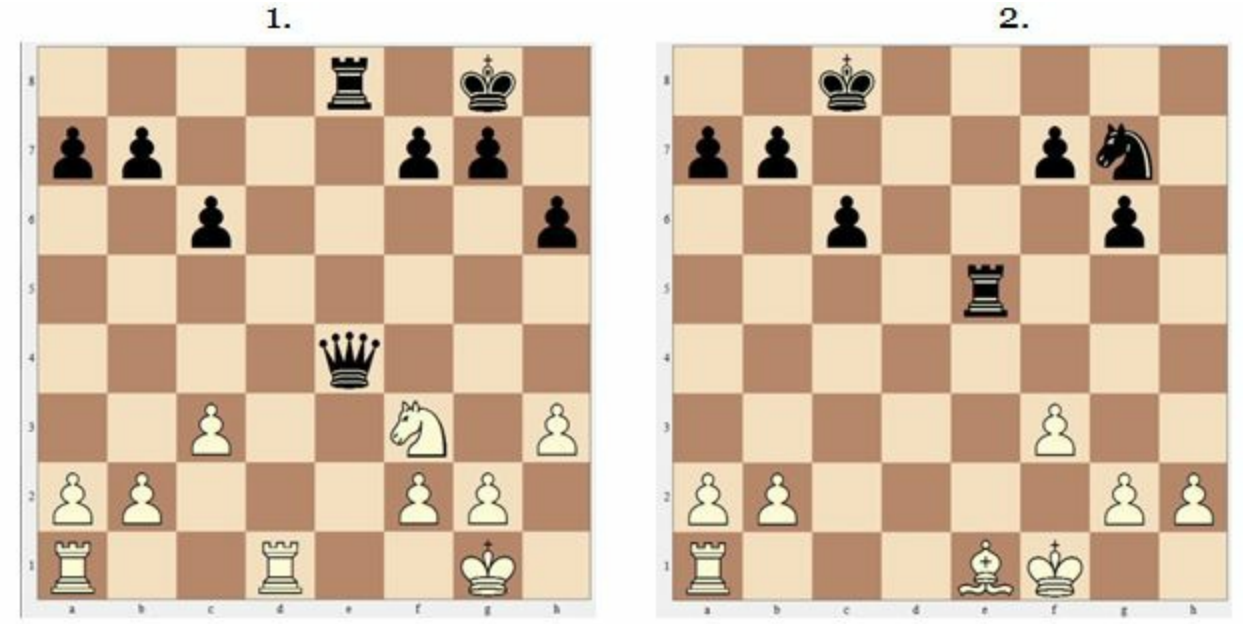


In each of the above four positions, White checks the Black King, it will have to move out of the check, and then the piece behind the King gets exposed and captured.

The answers are:
1) Rb1+ 2) Qb3+ 3) Bb5+ 4) Rb5+

However, not all skewers involve a check.

The following two examples show skewers without a check.



Here are the answers:

5) Re1 6) Bc3

In all of the above examples, Black cannot avoid losing material after the correct White move.

Remember, only the linear pieces such as the Queen, Rooks, and Bishops are able to create skewers.

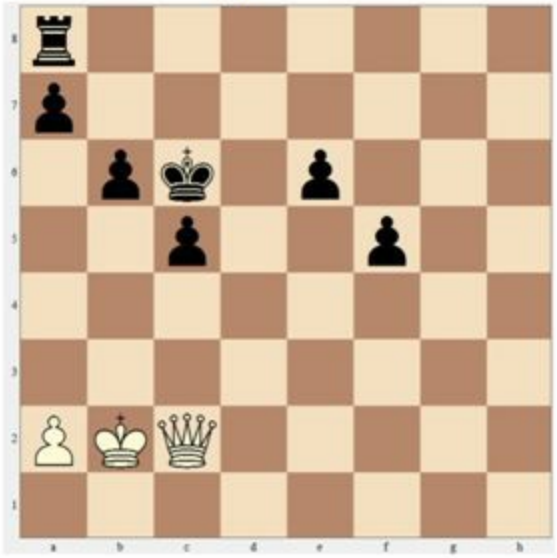
Lesson 7 – Test

1-6. Find the correct move for White in each of the following six positions which will create a skewer and lead to material gain.

1.

2.

3.



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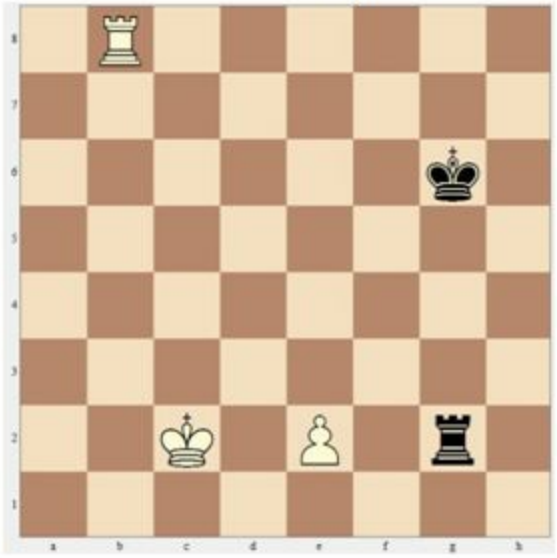


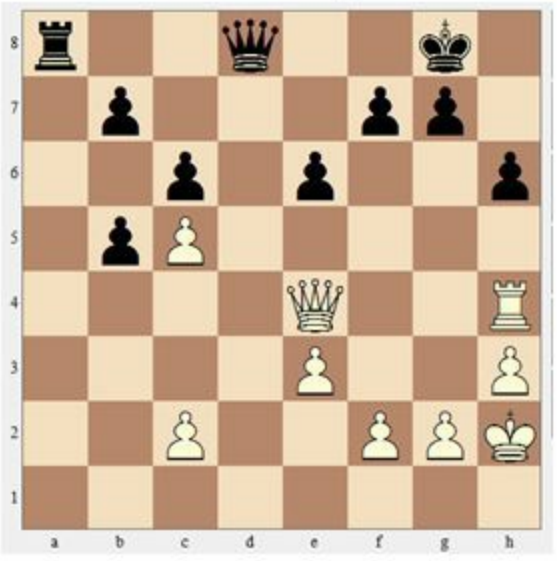
5.

6.

7-12. Black to move. Find the best move to win material !

7.

8.



9.

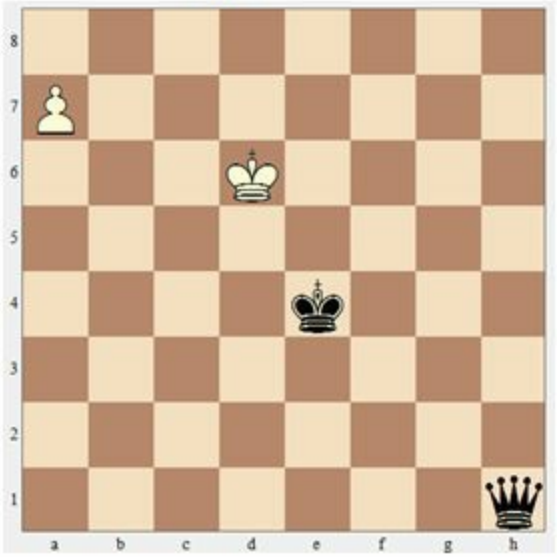
10.

11.

12.

13-18. It is White to move. Find the best move to win material!

13.



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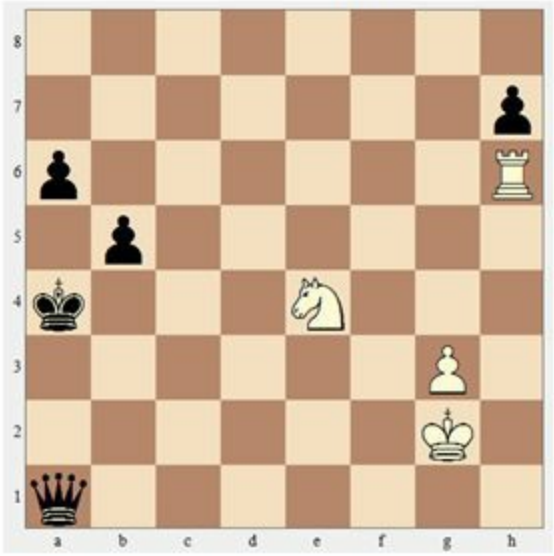

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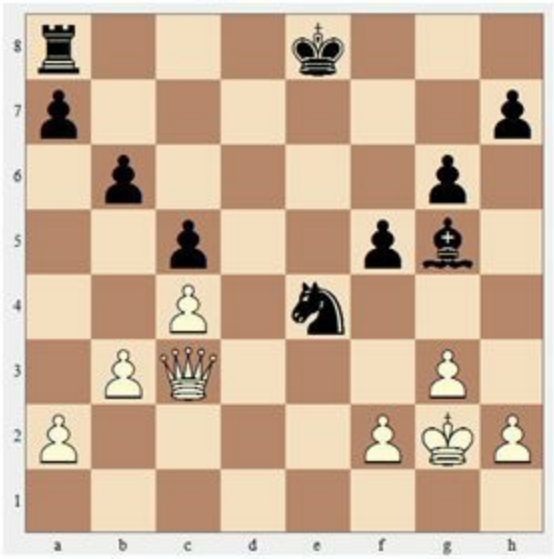


16.

17.

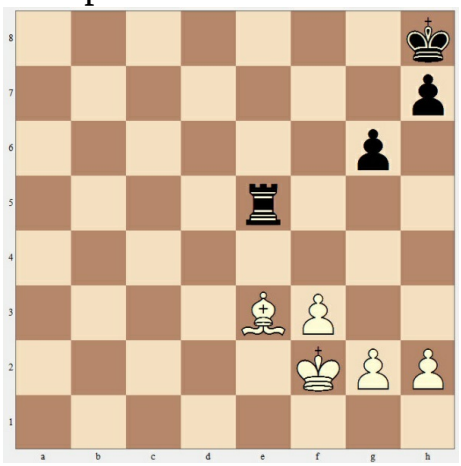
18.

Lesson 8: PIN

Now that you know about forks and skewers, in this lesson you will learn about a very cool tactic called **pin**. Pinning an opponent's piece is a very powerful tool to either limit to moves of that piece or to gain material advantage. In some cases, it can even help to checkmate.

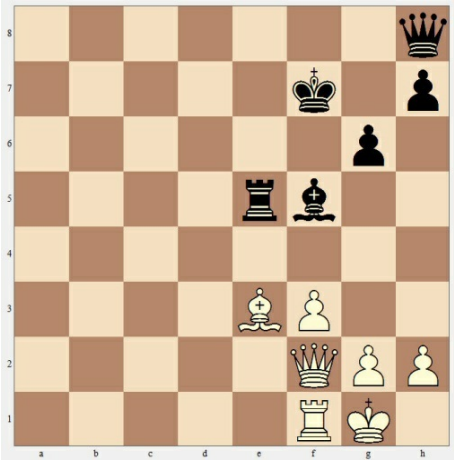
Just as with skewers, only the Queen, Rooks or Bishops are able to pin. Also just like skewers it has three elements: a piece that pins, and two enemy pieces, the one that is pinned and the one behind it. In any pin, all three of these pieces need to be on the same rank, file or diagonal.

First, let's see how to make a pin.



In the position above, White can create an ***absolute pin*** by playing Bd4. This move attacks the Black Rook on e5 which cannot move as it would leave the King on h8 exposed, and therefore would be an illegal move.

Let's compare this position with the next example.

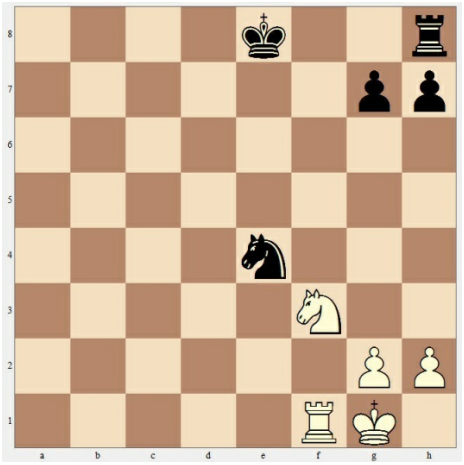


White can still play Bd4 here. However, it will “only” result a ***relative pin***. That means that Black is allowed to move the Rook from e5 to save it. But in this case, Black will end up losing an even more valuable piece, the Queen.

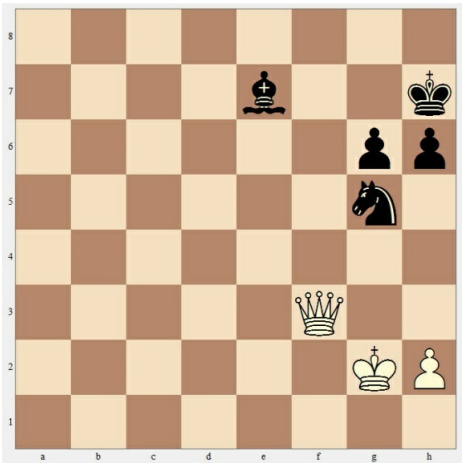
If Black does not move the Rook and plays for example Qe8, then on the next move White can capture the Rook (Bxe5), and after Qxe5, White wins an **“exchange”**.

Winning an exchange means that you give up a Bishop (3 points) or Knight (3 points) for the opponent’s Rook (5 points). This is equal to a two point gain.

Here are some examples of pins by the Rook and Queen.



In this position, White can play Re1 creating an absolute pin to win the Black Knight.



In the position above, White should play Qb7, pinning (and winning) the Black Bishop.

Lesson 8 – Test

1-6. White to move in each of the next six positions. Which is the move that leads to material gain by creating a pin?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7-12. It is Black to move. Find the best move to win material with the help of a pin!

7.

8.

9.

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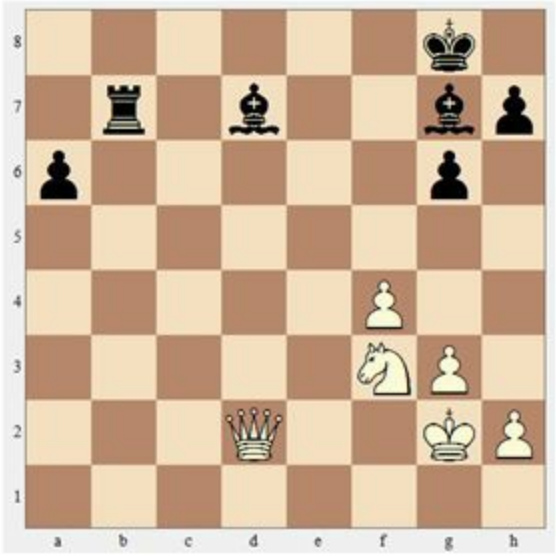
11.



12.

13-18. It is White to move. Find the best move to win material with the help of a pin!

13.

14.

15.

16.

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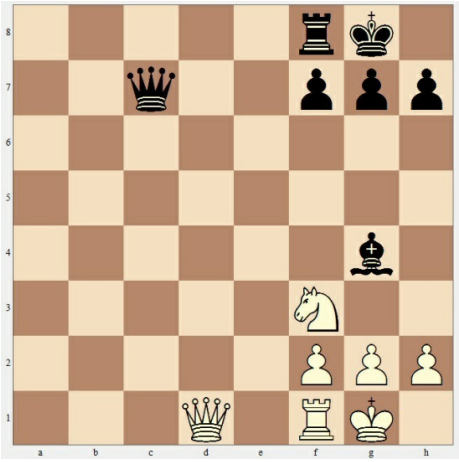
18.

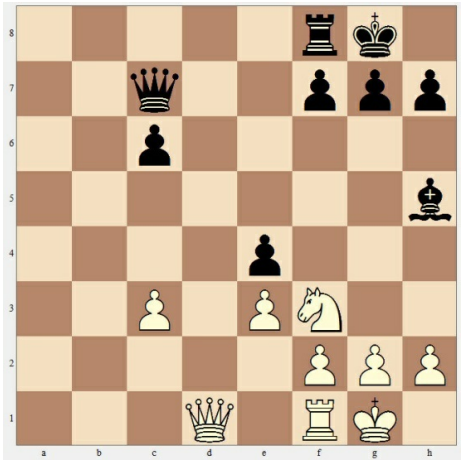
Lesson 9: TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE PIN

In lesson 8, you just learned what a pin is and how to create one when an opportunity comes by. However, not all pins are deadly or lead to material gain/loss.

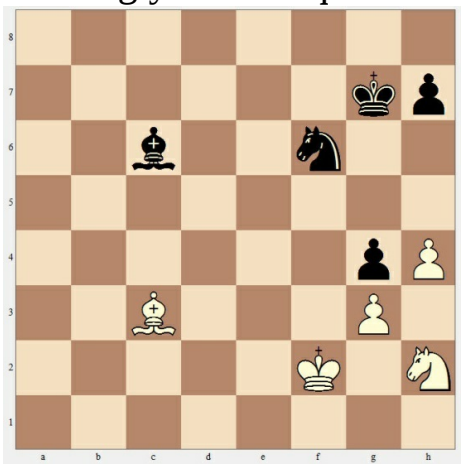


In the above position, the White Knight on f3 is pinned by Black's Bishop on g4. However, it does not create any trouble because the White Knight does not have to move away. (If it would have to then of course the Queen on d1 would be hanging.) And capturing the Knight on f3 is *not* a threat as it is well protected by White's Queen (and Pawn).

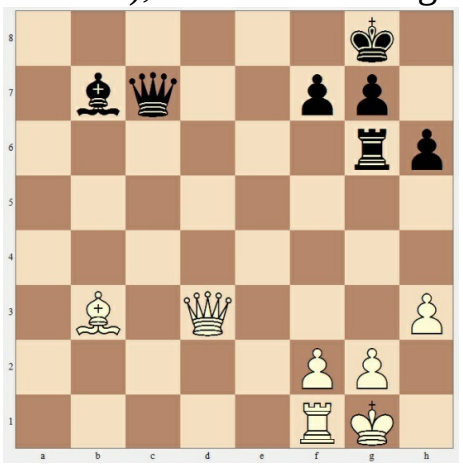
On the other hand in the next example White's Knight is in trouble because of the pin.



Let’s see some more situations on how to use an already existing pin.
The example below shows the power of a pin, and how it allows one of your own pieces to move to a seemingly unsafe square.

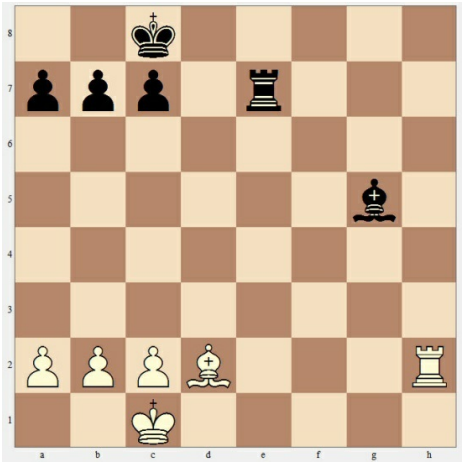


Here, White can safely capture Black’s Pawn on g4 (and attack the Black Knight on f6 for the second time), because the Knight on f6 is pinned.



In this example, White can safely capture the Black Rook on g6 as the Pawn on f7 is pinned by the White Bishop.

In the next example, Black even succeeds to checkmate thanks to a pin.



The move to checkmate is Re1#.

Lesson 9 – Test

1-6. In each of the next six positions, circle the pinned piece and find a way how Black can take advantage of the existing pin.

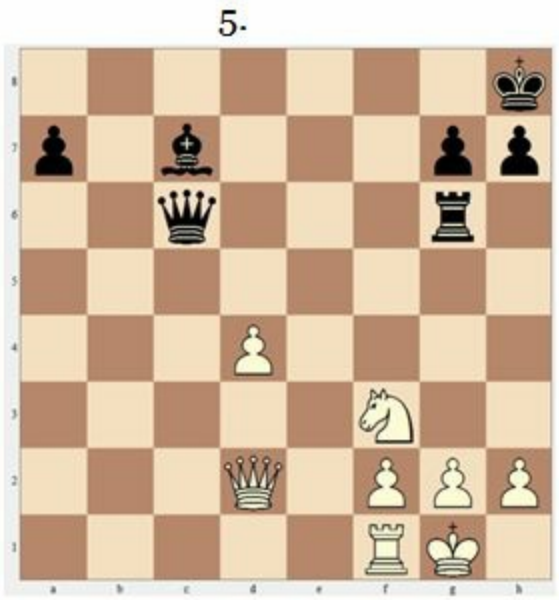
1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



6.

7-12. It is White to move. Find the best move to win material by using the pin!

7.

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9.

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11.

12.

11.

12.

13-18. It is White to move. Find the best move to win material by using the pin!

13.

14.

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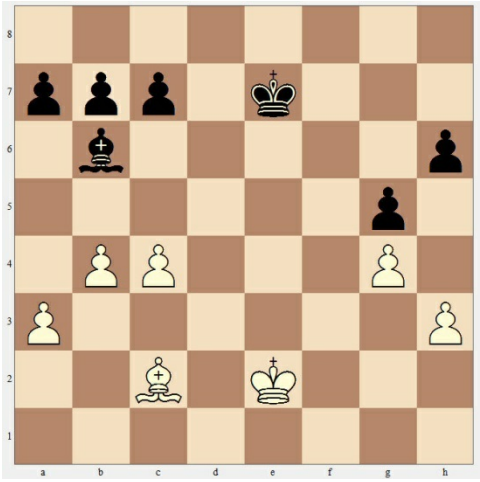
18.

Lesson 10: TRAPPING A PIECE

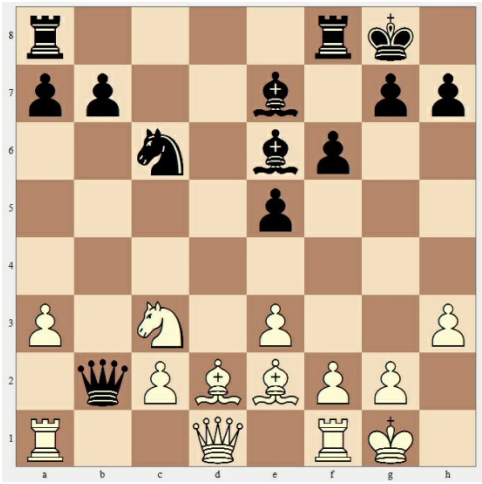
Another way to win material is to simply trap an enemy piece.

Here is a basic example when a Bishop gets trapped.

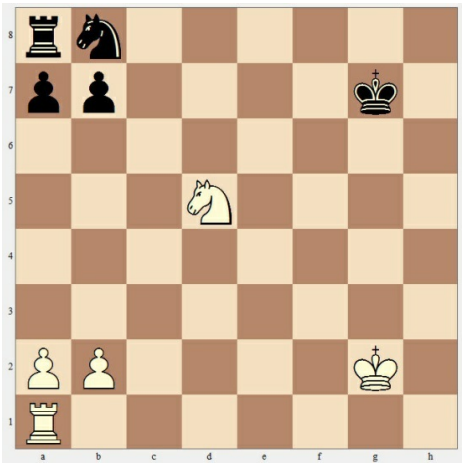


White simply advances the “c” Pawn to c5, and Black’s Bishop has no safe escape.

In the next two examples, the Black Queen gets in trouble.

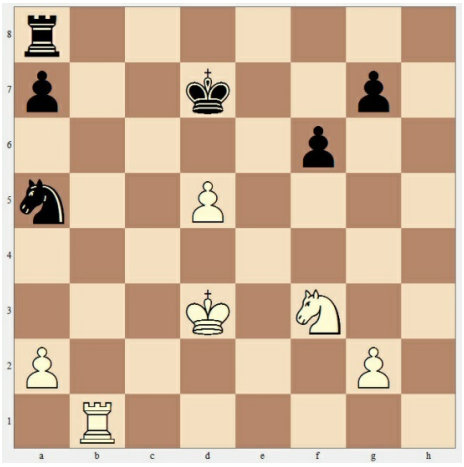


White can trap the Black Queen by attacking it with Na4. On the other hand attacking it with Rb1 would not work as the Queen can escape by capturing the Pawn on a3.



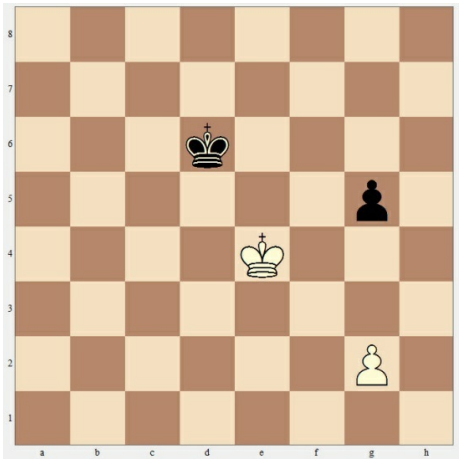
In the position above, White can trap Black's Rook with Nc7. The possibility of such a trap is one of the reasons why it is recommended to develop your pieces early in the game.

In the next example, the Black Knight will be trapped.



Here the key move is Rb5 and the Black Knight is lost.

Of course even Pawns can get trapped.



In the position above, after Kf5, Black cannot save the Pawn on g5.

Lesson 10 – Test

1-6. Find the move that traps one of the Black pieces.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

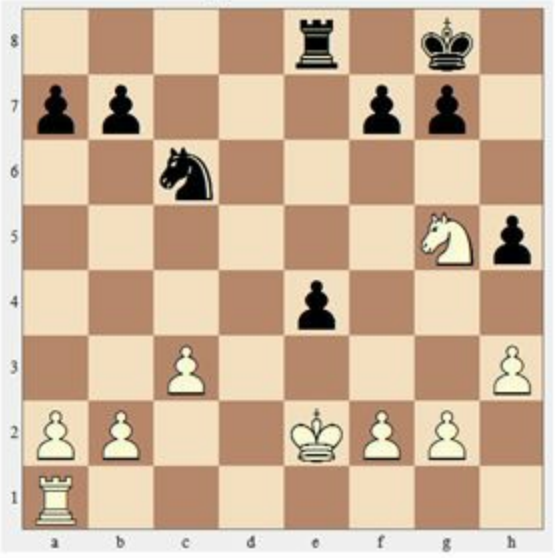
6.

7-12. It is Black to move. Find the best move to trap one of the White pieces!

7.

8.

9.



10.

11.

12.

13-18. It is White to move. Find the best move to trap one of the Black pieces!

13.

14.

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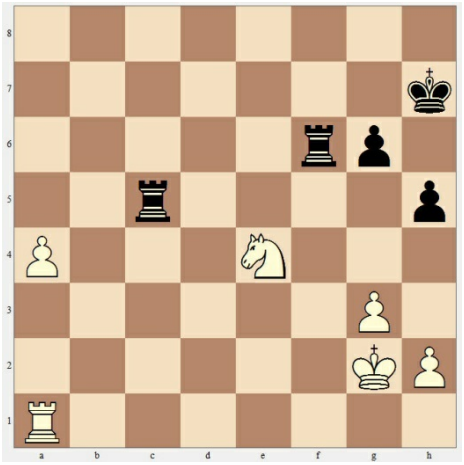
Lesson 11: DEFENSE

Naturally it is important to remember that not all attacks, tactics, or traps work all the time.

In this lesson, you will learn about defensive tools and escape methods.

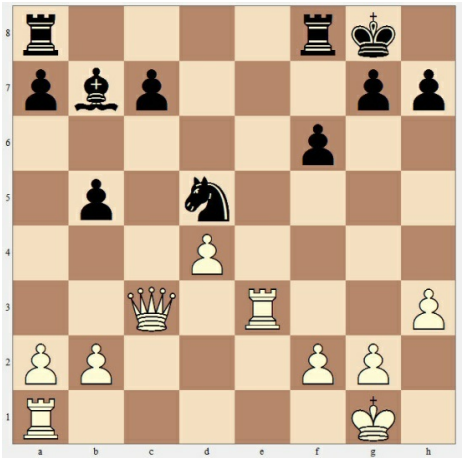


In the position above, it seems that Black is in trouble as the White Knight attacks (forks) both of the Rooks (on c5 and f6).

However, Black can escape without losing either Rook by playing Rc2+. Then while White is busy getting out of the check by moving the King, Black's other Rook is also free to go.

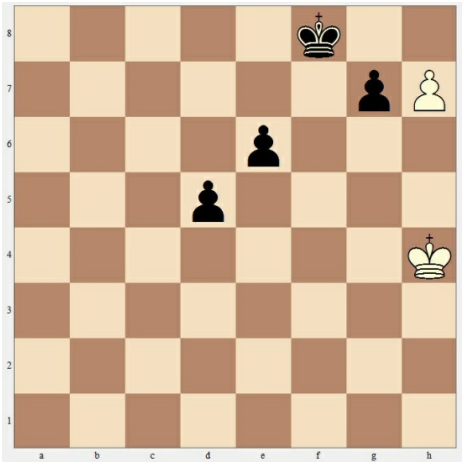
This method of escape is called: **intermediate check** or **in-between move**.

In the next example, White escapes thanks to pinning.



Here, Black is forking the White Queen and Rook. However, White saves both pieces with Qb3.

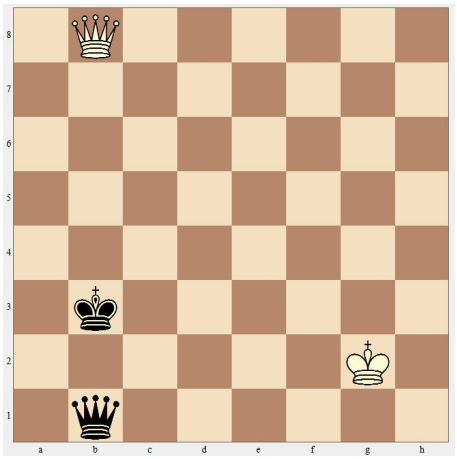
In the next position, it seems that the White Pawn on h7 is unstoppable.



The Black King would need to move to g7 to hold off the promotion of White's Pawn. The problem is Black has his own Pawn on that (g7) square.

Therefore, the solution is to give up on that Pawn by playing g5+. White must respond to the check first with a move such as 2.Kxg5. Black will then have time to play 2…Kg7 to defend the h8 promotion square.

In the next example, the skewer does not lead to any material gain.

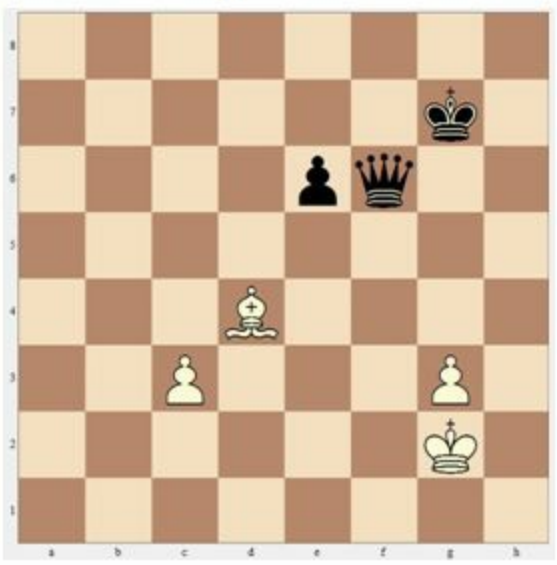


Here luckily for Black, the King is close enough to the Queen. So by moving to c2 or a2 out of the check, Black can avoid losing material.

Lesson 11 – Test

1-6. Find the key move in each of the next six puzzles on how to escape (as Black) and avoid losing any material.

1.



2.

3.

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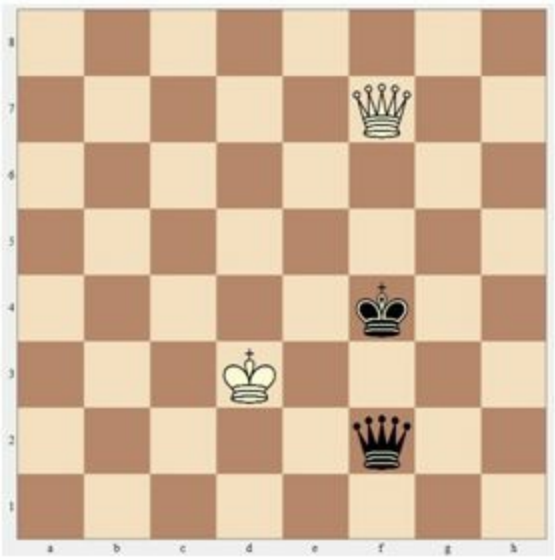


5.

6.

7-12. It is White to move. Find a way to avoid material loss!

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13-18. It is Black to move. Find a way to avoid material loss!

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

Lesson 12: INTRODUCTION OF FAMOUS OPENINGS

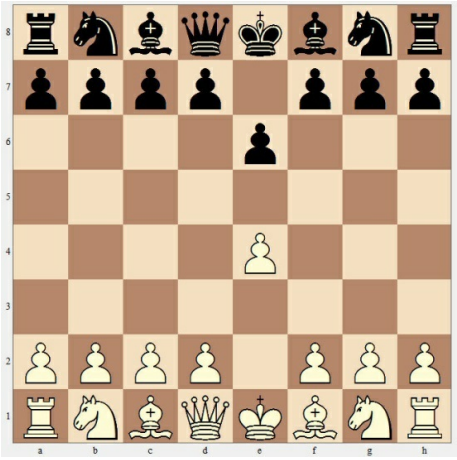
So far we have learned about various checkmate techniques and tricks, as well tactics to win material. Those skills are very important as they can be used at any stage of the game.

Most chess games have three parts: opening, middlegame and endgame.

What is the opening? The opening is the beginning part of a chess game, typically the first 10-12 moves or so. In that phase, the task is to develop your pieces and get your King to safety by castling. Of course along the way you want to make sure not to lose any material and control the center as much as you can.

In this lesson, you will be introduced to some of the most popular opening moves.

When a game starts with **1.e4 e6** it is called the **French defense**.

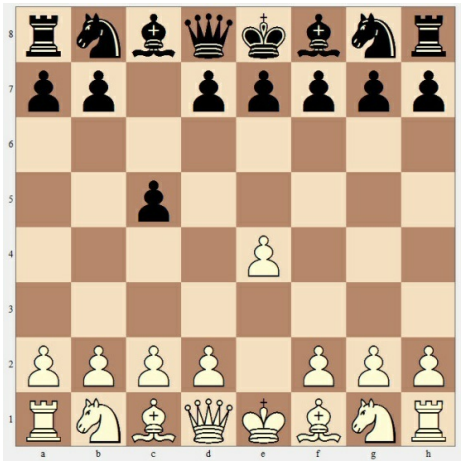


Then usually the games continue with both sides fighting for the center with **2.d4 d5**. At that point White has to decide what to do with the attacked Pawn on e4.

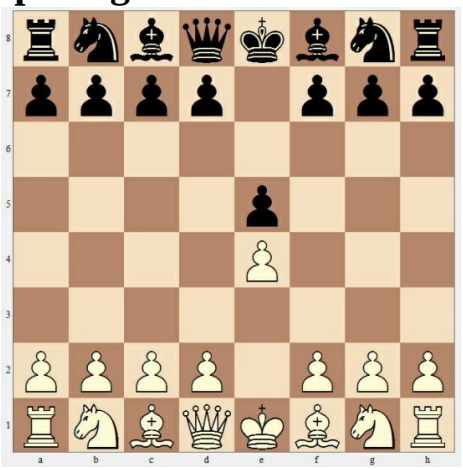
White has a number of choices which are all reasonable.

3. 3. Nc3 or **3.Nd2**, both protecting the Pawn on e4. White can also advance the Pawn with **3.e5**, and finally trading on d5 with **3.exd5** is ok too.

When a game starts with **1.e4 c5**, it is the **Sicilian defense**.

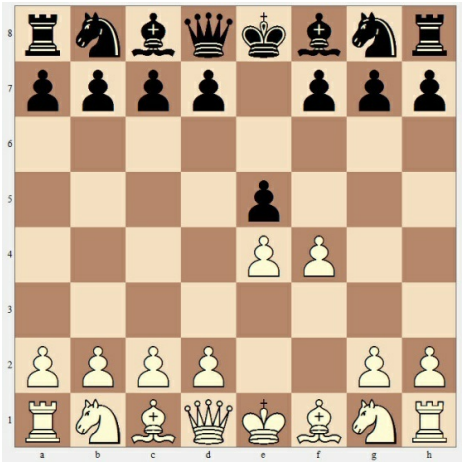


In most games in the old days, Black used to respond **1.e4** with **1…e5**, which lead to the **King Pawn Openings**.



Then White has many options. Most common and normal is to start developing one of the Knights (to f3 or c3) or the Bishop (to c4).

In addition to those typical moves, White can also play in a much more risky way in **gambit** style. Gambit means that one side sacrifices (usually a Pawn) early on for quicker development. One such gambit is for example the *King's Gambit*, which starts with **2.f4**.

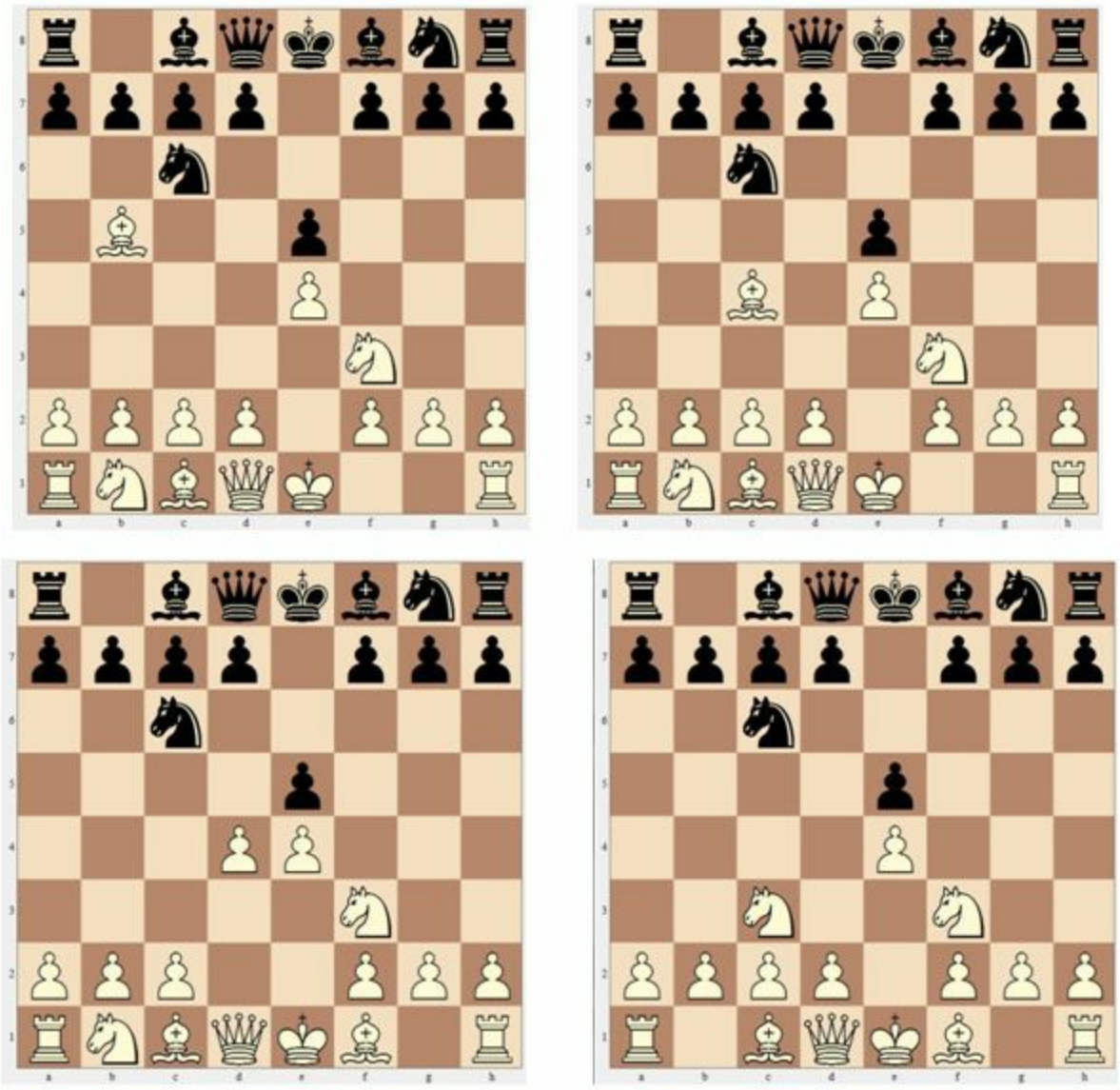


However, I would not recommend that to a beginner player.

More commonly, White continues (after 1.e4 e5) with **2.Nf3** targeting the Pawn on e5. Black typically protects the Pawn with **2…Nc6**.

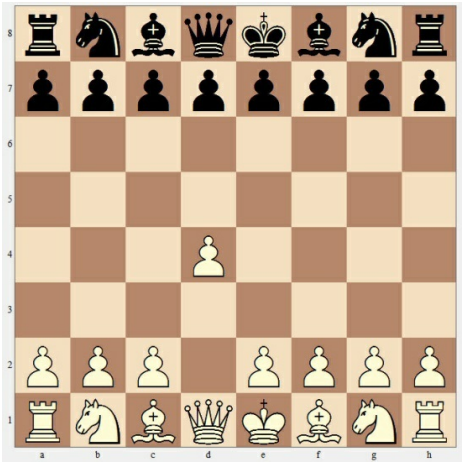
Here, White has four regular ways to continue:

a) 3.Bb5 – **The Spanish** (or also called Ruy Lopez)
b) 3.Bc4 – **The Italian** (which can lead to the Two Knights' defense if Black responds with 3…Nf6)
c) 3.d4 – **The Scotch**
d) 3.Nc3 – **The Four Knights**



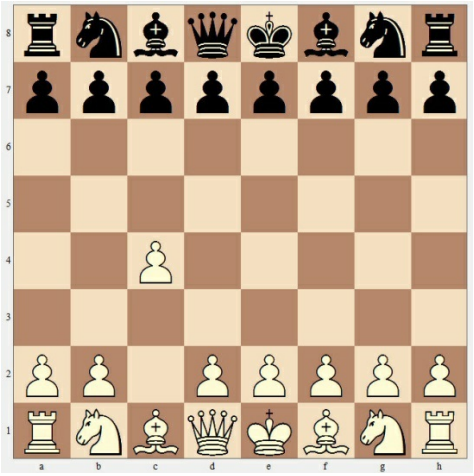
If you are playing this position as White, it is a matter of taste which one you would like to choose from the four choices. The Italian is the trickiest one. However, if Black responds correctly, it is not any better than one of the other three options.

White can also start the game with 1.d4 (**Queen Pawn Opening**), which is just as good as starting with 1.e4 as both of those moves fight for the control of the center.



The Queen Pawn Openings usually lead to a more solid start.

Starting the game with **1.c4** is also fine.



This is the start of the **English opening**.

Starting moves such as 1.a4 or 1.Na3 are not good as neither would control the center.

Lesson 12 – Test

1. What is the name of the opening/defense that starts with 1.e4 c5?

2. What is the name of the opening/defense that starts with 1.e4 e6?

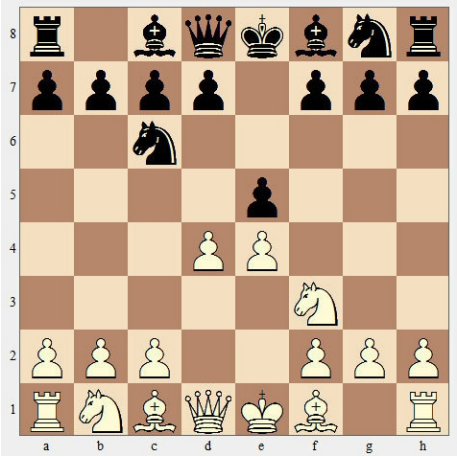
3. What is the starting move of the English Opening?

4. Is playing 1.Nh3 a good way to start a game?

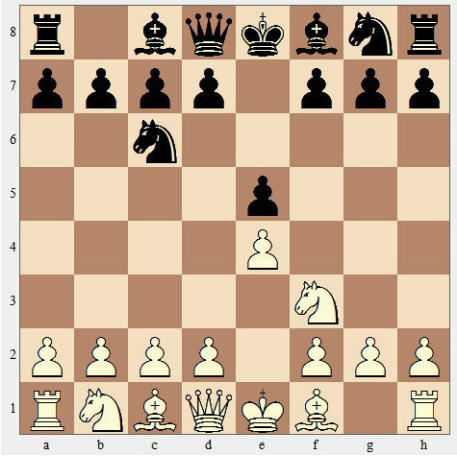
5. What are the starting moves of the King’s Gambit?

6. Does usually games starting with 1.e4 or 1.d4 lead to a more solid start?

7. The position seen below has been reached after White’s third move. Which opening do we call this?

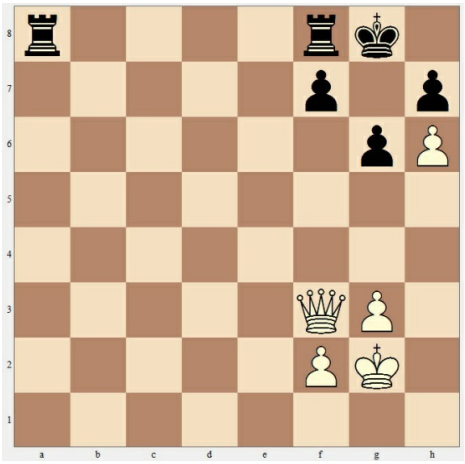


8. In the position below, which White move would define the Ruy Lopez?



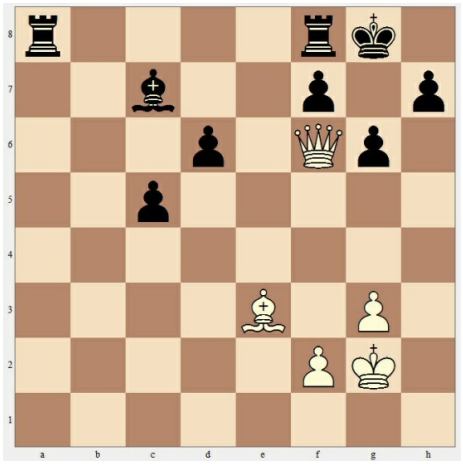
Lesson 13: TYPICAL CHECKMATE THEMES

Let’s see some more typical checkmate themes.

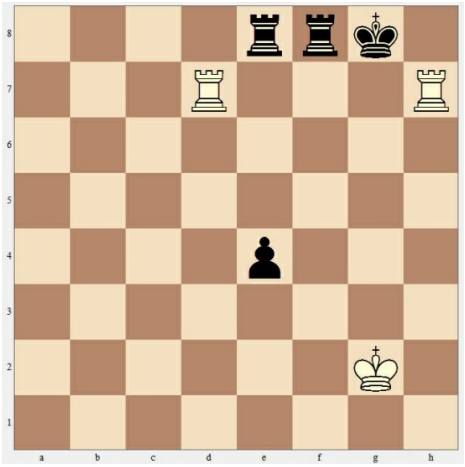


In the diagram above, White can play Qf6 and with the help of the h6 Pawn, threaten to checkmate on g7. Black is helpless against the threat.

In the next example, White can use the same idea in a different form.

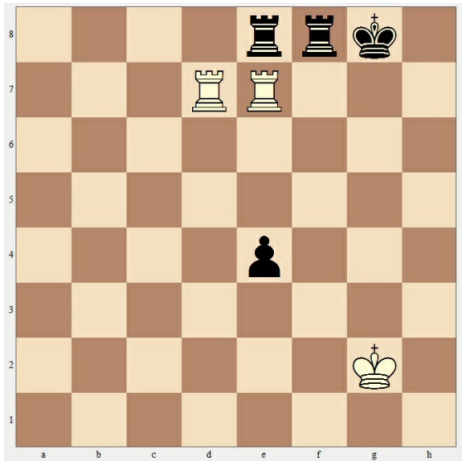


Here, the White Queen is already ideally positioned. It is time to bring the Bishop to help the attack with Bh6. Black again has no defense.



Here is a typical checkmate pattern that involves the two Rooks.

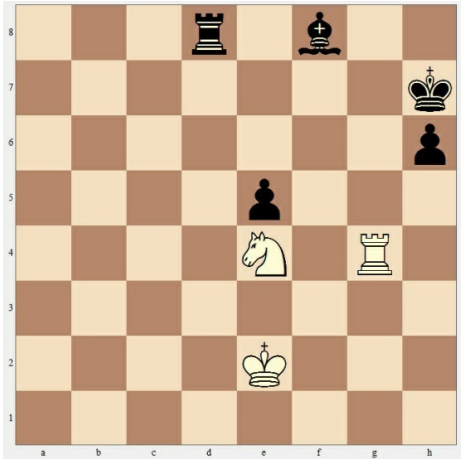
Here, White is ready to checkmate with Rook from d7 to g7 (Rdg7).



In the position above, White can force checkmate on the third move. Can you see how?

Here is the correct answer: 1.Rg7+ Kh8 2.Rh7+ Kg8 and we are back to the previous diagram where the answer was 3.Rdg7 checkmate.

Finally let’s see a common checkmate where the Rook and the Knight work together.



White to move and force checkmate on the second move.

First, check with ***1.Nf6***+, then Black has only one possible move: 1…Kh8

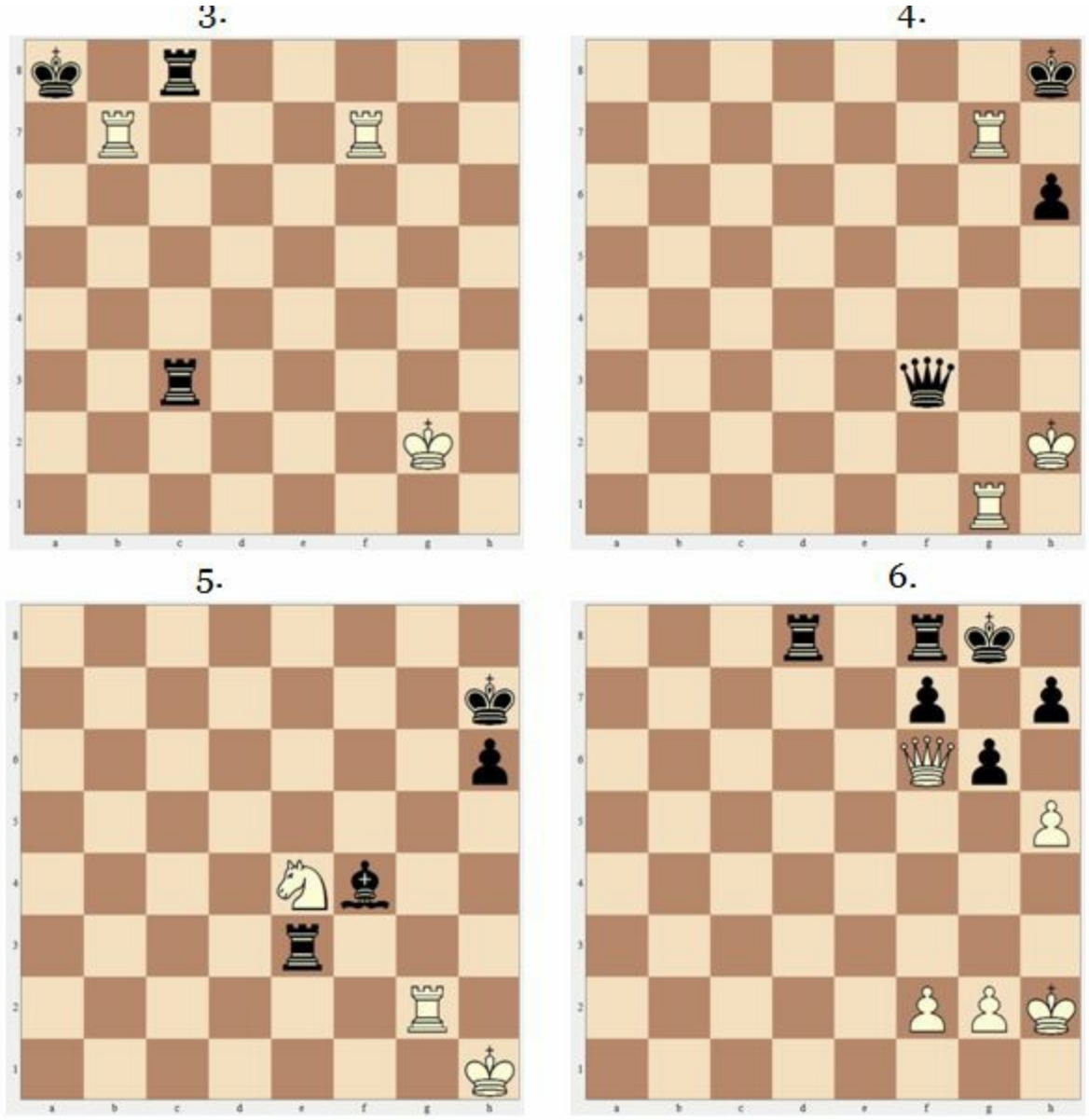
and White is ready to end the game with ***2.Rg8*** checkmate.

Lesson 13 – Test

1-6. Find the solution in each of the puzzles below. How to checkmate Black on the second move? (Notate all the moves, White, Black, followed by White.)

1.

2.



7-12. It is Black to move. How can White force checkmate in just two moves?

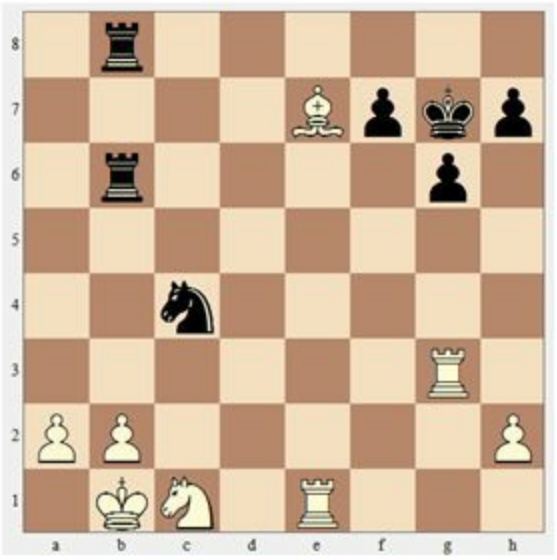
7.

8.

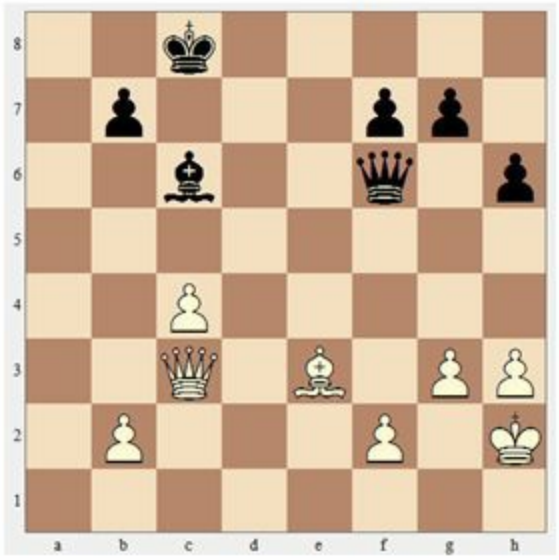
9.

10.

11.



12.



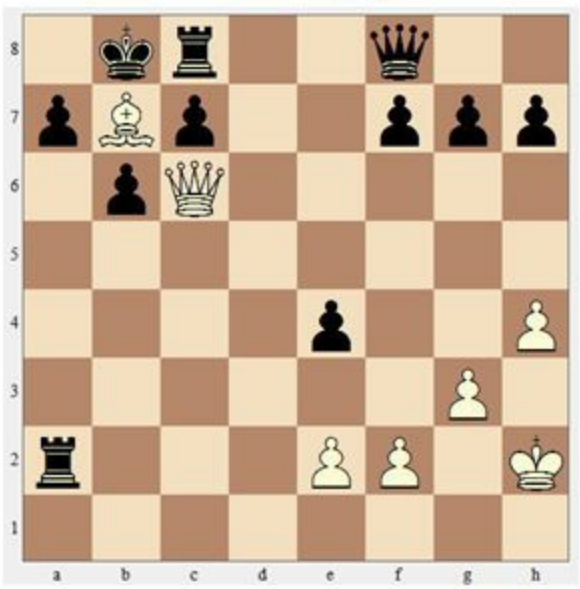
13-18. It is White to move. How can White force checkmate in just two moves?

13.

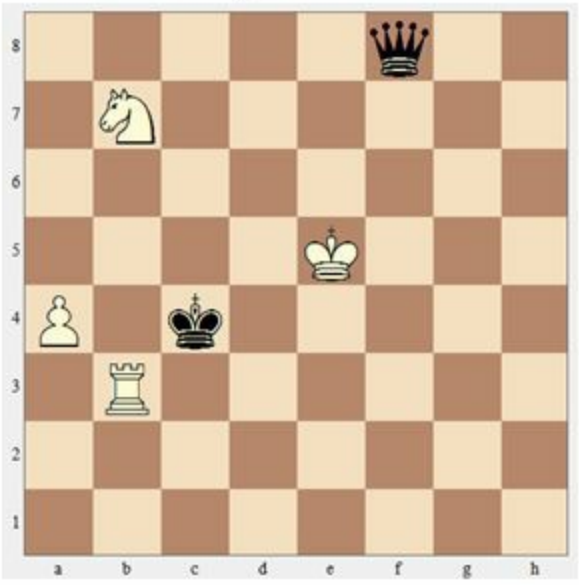
14.

15.

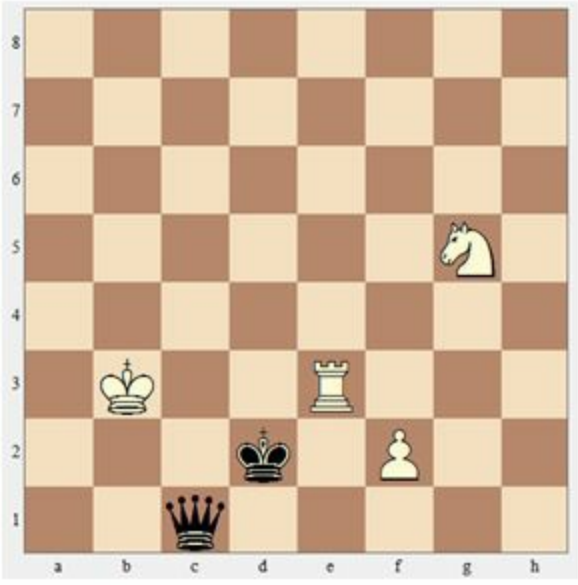
16.



17.



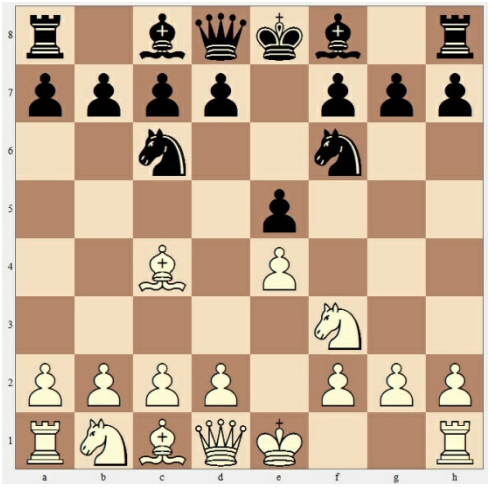
18.



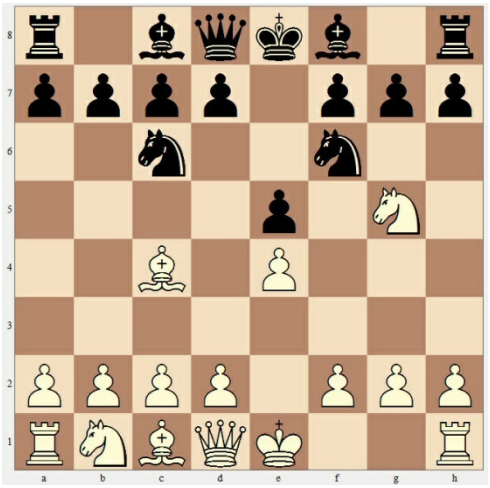
Lesson 14: TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE

In this lesson, we will look at the **Two Knights' defense** in a bit more detail. It starts after the first moves:

1.e4 e5
2.Nf3 Nc6
3.Bc4 Nf6

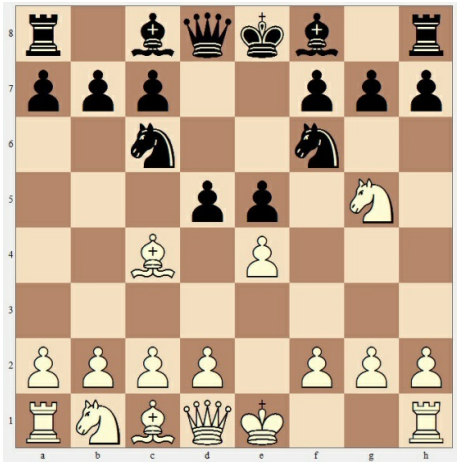


In this position, White can choose between solidly defending the Pawn on e4 by playing 4.Nc3 or 4.d3, or playing more aggressively with 4.Ng5.



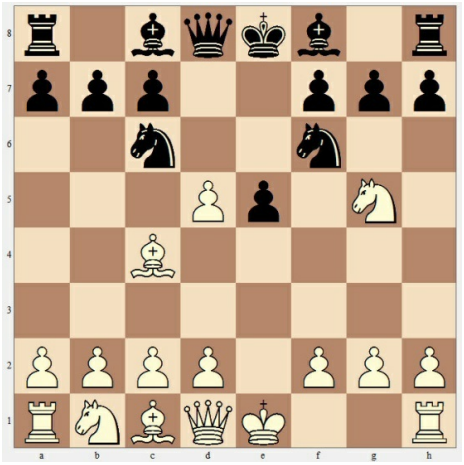
See above the position after **4.Ng5**. White with the last move has attacked Black's Pawn on f7 a second time. If Black is careless, White will capture the Pawn (on f7) creating a fork (attacking Black's Queen and Rook at the same time) by the Knight (Nxf7).

The only way to stop the threat and avoid losing the f7 Pawn is by playing **4…d5**.



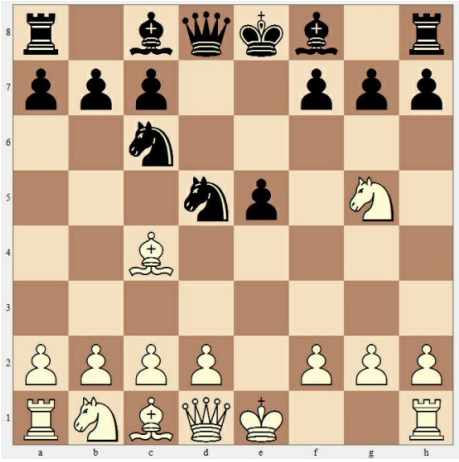
Black's last move blocked the White Bishop's attack on the Pawn on f7.

5.exd5



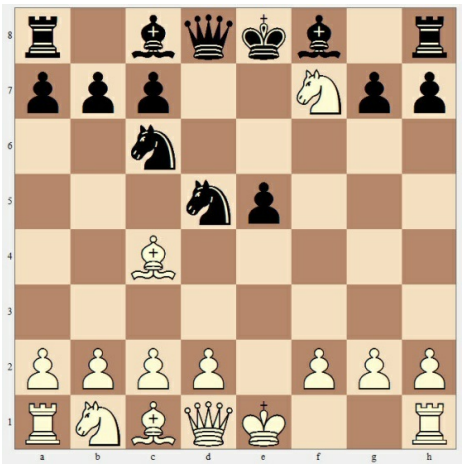
White captured Black's Pawn on d5.

Let's see what happens after Black recaptures with **5…Nxd5**.



Notice that after Black's last move, the Queens diagonal (d8-h4) has opened up and it targets the White Knight on g5.

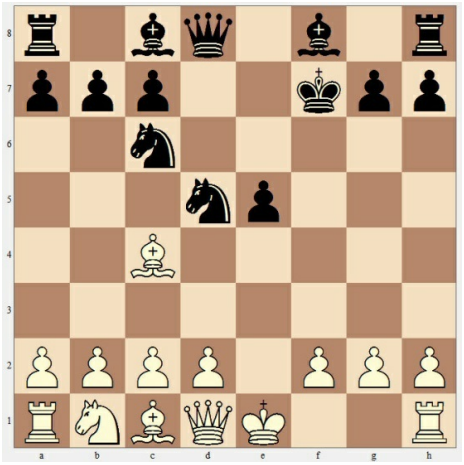
Here, White has the option to go for the famous and centuries old "Fried Liver Attack", which starts with a sacrifice of **6.Nxf7**.



White sacrifices a Knight for just a Pawn. However, the idea of the sacrifice is to invite the Black King out in the open. Even though this gambit has been played for hundreds of years even today experts are not sure about its correct evaluation.

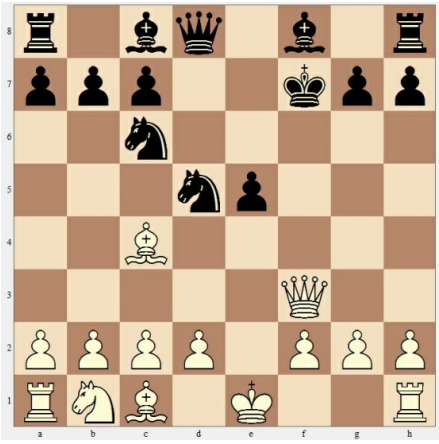
Black's best choice is to accept the sacrifice. Otherwise, Black would lose more material.

6…Kxf7

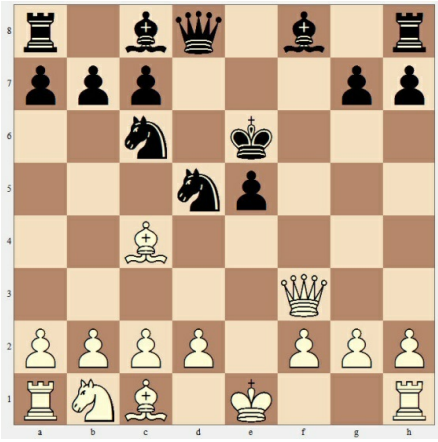


7.Qf3+

This is the whole idea behind the Knight sacrifice.

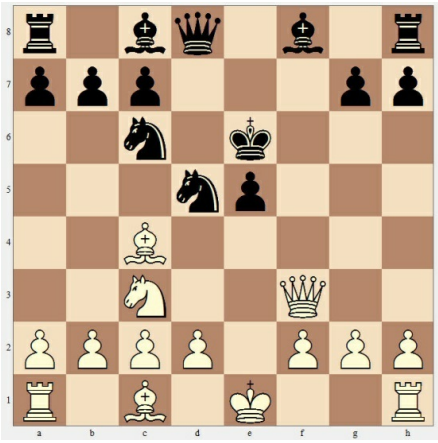


Quite surprisingly here Black's best defense is **7…Ke6** moving out toward the middle of the board with the King, which is always very dangerous as long as there are Queens on the board.



After any other move instead of 7…Ke6, White would simply capture Black's Knight on d5 and be up a Pawn. Much worse would be retreating with the King to g8 (7…Kg8) as then White checkmates in just three more moves
8.Bxd5+ Qxd5 9.Qxd5+ Be6 and 10.Qxe6 checkmate.

After 7…Ke6, White should continue with **8.Nc3** to put more pressure on Black's pinned Knight.



Here, the Black Knight on d5 cannot move because it is pinned. Therefore, Black has to choose between defending the Knight on d5 with the other Knight on b4 or e7. After either choice, White still has a strong attack going due to the unsafe position of the Black King.

How can Black avoid all these dangers? Well, the simplest of all is by playing 3…Bc5 instead of 3…Nf6. But we will discuss more about that in the

next lesson.

Lesson 14 - Test

1. What is the only way Black can hang on to the Knight on d5 in the following position?

2. What move in the position below leads to the famous "Fried Liver Attack"?

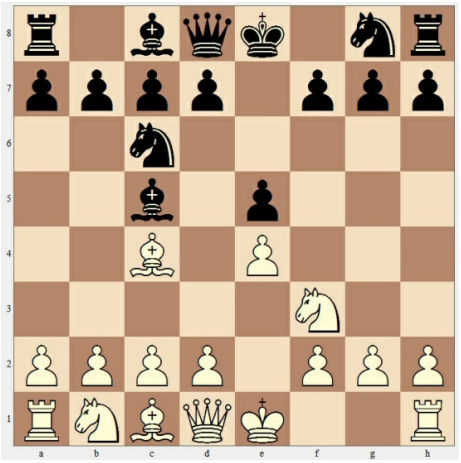
3. The position seen below has been reached after White's third move. What is the name of the opening?

4. After White's 3.Bc4, what is the simplest way to avoid the" Fried Liver Attack"?

Lesson 15: ITALIAN GAME WITH 5.Ng5

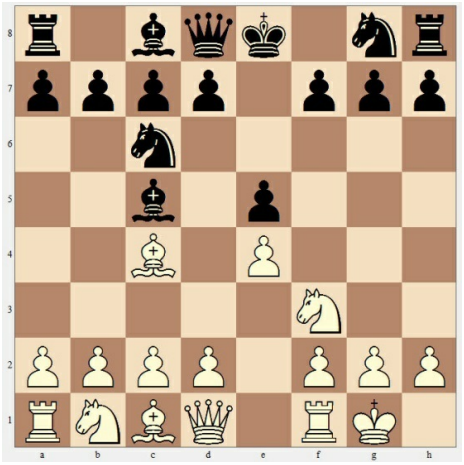
After **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4** Black can avoid the risky positions we saw in the last lesson by playing **3…Bc5**.

Let’s see what may happen in the next few moves.



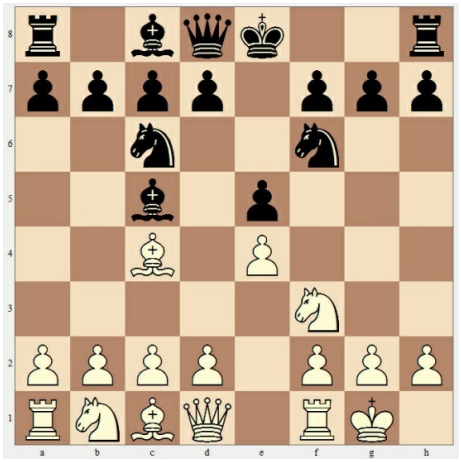
Now the same aggressive idea with 4.Ng5 does not work as the Black Queen could simply capture the White Knight on g5. The difference is that Black has delayed the development of the Knight from g8 to f6 and therefore the Queen’s diagonal is still open.

4.0-0



White has castled with its last move to put the King to safety.

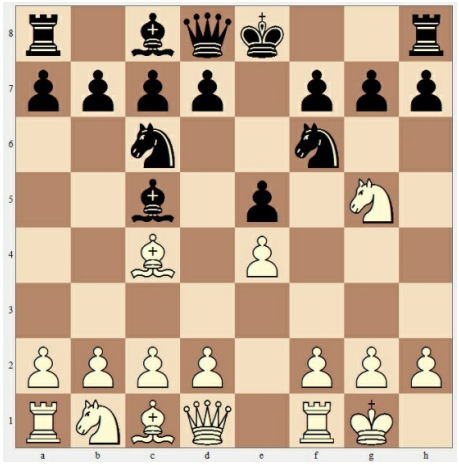
4…Nf6



Now that Black “closed up” the diagonal of the Queen toward the g5 square, White can try the same Ng5 idea again. However, as we will see, it doesn’t work so well for White at this point already.

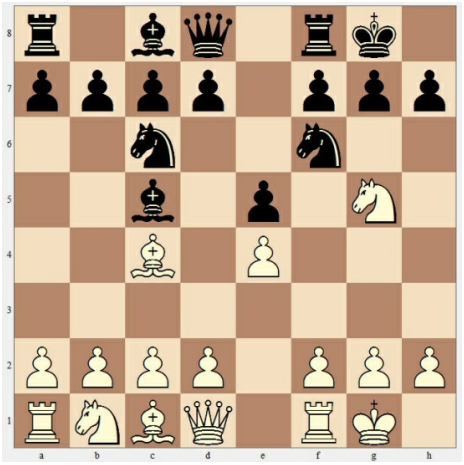
It is wiser for White to continue with 5.d3 or 5.Nc3 instead.

5.Ng5



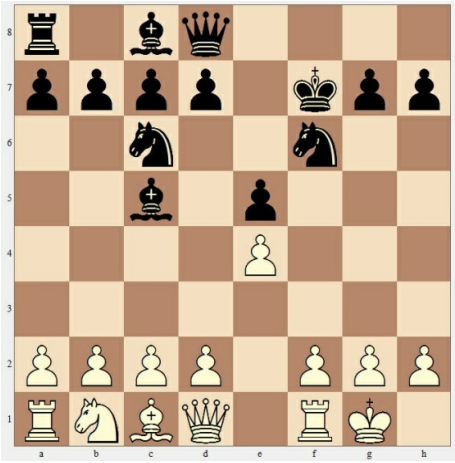
The big improvement for Black compared to the position after 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Ng5 (which we learned about in chapter 14) is that since the Bishop (of f8) as well as the Knight (of g8) have both already developed, Black is ready to castle!

5…0-0



The point is that now Black protects the Pawn a second time. 5…Rf8 would be a much worse choice because then Black would have given up the right in this game to castle to the Kingside.

If now White still captures on f7, **6.Nxf7**, Black captures **6…Rxf7 7.Bxf7+ Kxf7**.



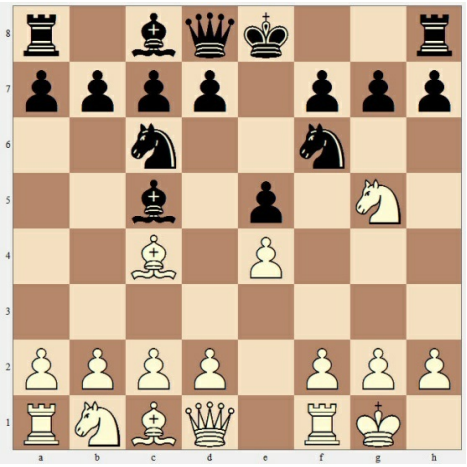
In the position in the diagram above, Black has nothing to worry about. As part of the action on f7, White gave up a Bishop and a Knight (which equal to 6 points total) against a Black Rook and Pawn (which also equal to 6 points).

So materially speaking, it was an even trade. The problem is that White spent a lot of time to achieve this trade.

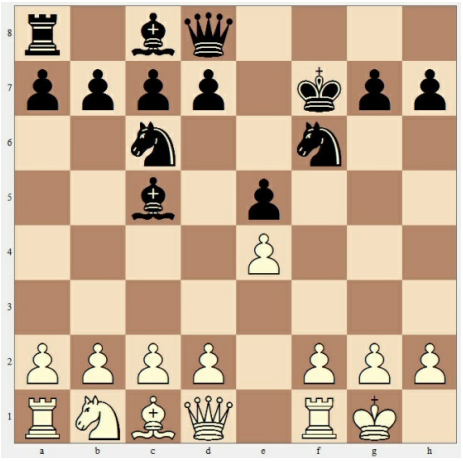
It is true that the Black King is a little awkward in its current position. However, White will not be able to prevent Black from retreating to safety on g8. After that, Black will have no problem at all.

Lesson 15 – Test

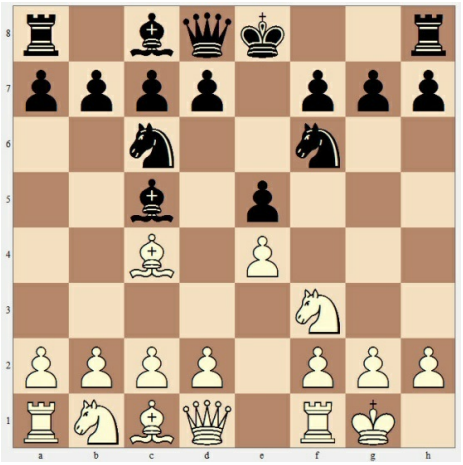
1. What is the key defensive move in this position?



2. What is the material balance in the diagram below? Which side is better?



3. Is ***5.Ng5*** a good idea for White in this position?



Congratulations on finishing your training! Studying chess can be a challenging endeavor, especially when first starting out. But after you begin to improve and deepen your knowledge of the game, you should not only begin to enjoy the game more than ever before but also be winning more games and see your rating increase.

For those of you that are ready to continue the journey to chess Mastery, I recommend the next course in the series, Chess From Beginner to Advanced at Warp Speed Volume II. In volume II you will learn more advanced tactics, openings, and checkmates, as well as very important advanced end game concepts that every strong chess player must know in order to compete at the higher levels and win.

I hope you enjoyed this volume and look forward to continuing your training as we enjoy this wonderful game that we all love called CHESS.

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